The

COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature the Arts and Public Affairs

FOUNDED BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

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Previous issues of THE COMMONWEAL are indexed in the *Reader's Guide and the Catholic Periodical Index.*

Week by Week

TWO WEEKS ago THE COMMONWEAL carried an editorial paragraph announcing a change in the ownership of the magazine. That paragraph promised a more extended statement in this issue.

THE COMMONWEAL in Transition

From the time of its establishment in 1924 until two weeks ago, THE COMMONWEAL was published by a corporation which was the property of The Calvert Associates. As most of our readers know, The Calvert Associates is a group of Catholics and non-Catholics founded in the belief that "religion is at once the foundation and the only sure guarantee of the highest forms of civilization and culture." It is impossible for the new directors of the magazine to make adequate acknowledgment to any of the men active in furthering the recognition of this truth and in launching and sustaining The Calvert Associates and THE COMMONWEAL. It is equally impossible not to mention specially the founder and editor, Mr. Michael Williams, the business manager and constant support, Mr. John F. McCormick, and Mr. William V. Griffin, for many years chairman of the board of directors. Their efforts have demanded over a period of nearly fifteen years a high measure of devotion and great personal sacrifice. There is often this difficulty in dealing with a group of scattered individuals such as The Calvert Associates—that in the course of time new interests claim their attention and material support. This happened with THE COMMONWEAL, and the only hope of continuing it and its unique work seemed to be to shift its material basis to one of strict self-sufficiency. This has been done. THE COMMONWEAL is now the property of a new, business corporation, and responsibility for it lies with those active in producing the magazine.

BUT WHAT will the new management do to THE COMMONWEAL? The field of interest will not be radically changed. THE COMMONWEAL will continue to publish articles by Catholics and non-Catholics upon social, economic and political questions. Poetry, literary and historical essays and sketches will continue as regular features of our columns. Articles on religious subjects will appear, which, it is expected, will be of such intrinsic value as to commend themselves to readers of all beliefs as well as to those who share the Catholic faith. The special departments of the magazine will be given greater attention and emphasis and will be worked over continually to create the greatest interest and the greatest continuity of interest from week to week. Readers will notice at once that a cartoon by Jean Charlot has been added to our editorial pages, while the "Seven Days' Survey" has been dropped. THE COMMONWEAL is better equipped to follow opinions about the news than to discover and record in chronicle fashion the passing events themselves. In order to keep our readers posted on matters of more strictly Catholic interest, and thus to counterbalance the usual over-secularization of American papers and periodicals, we are instituting a brief column dealing specifically with Catholic affairs, "The Inner Forum." The book review section will be developed into a unique literary service.

ANOTHER innovation, which we trust will long continue a feature, is the signed column, "Views and Reviews," written by Michael Williams. Mr. Williams will say here what he pleases on any subject that interests him, and we feel sure that his many friends and admirers will welcome this regular feature of THE COMMONWEAL, and would, indeed, feel the new COMMONWEAL a strange magazine without the continuance of his inspiring work.

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IN THE first issue of THE COMMONWEAL, November 12, 1924, the founders of the magazine affirmed as emphatically as they could the principle that "THE COMMONWEAL is not the organ of any political party, or of any single school of economic or social theory." Furthermore, "it will be in no sense—nor could it possibly assert itself to be—an authoritative or authorized mouthpiece of the Catholic Church." At this transition, THE COMMONWEAL again emphasizes these two principles. Its position must be even clearer now than before, because the magazine is no longer conducted by a membership association, but simply by a limited group of individuals. THE COMMONWEAL is not a "religious magazine" which deals with ecclesiastical and devotional matters, but is a general review whose primary field is human activity in politics, economics, literature, art, etc.—the "secular" field—and it will freely represent the various opinions of many collaborators and contributors. These opinions will not invariably express the final and unanimous opinion of all the editors, nor will the editors always be in perfect agreement among themselves. This breadth and freedom of expression will, of course, exist within the framework of complete loyalty to the Church and the teaching of the Holy See.

Affirm and Reaffirm

THE COMMONWEAL'S job is not to furnish a blueprint for ready action, social, economic or political. It is an enterprise in journalism; the effort of a group of American Catholics to observe affairs and opinions about affairs. It is impossible to give once and for all the political "line" of THE COMMONWEAL, because its line must be based on material and changing conditions as well as on unchanging moral and social principles, which are derived from the Catholic Church, from philosophy, from western and American traditions and from our own environment and experience. Although THE COMMONWEAL approaches public affairs with inevitable bias, it always has, and does now, claim to be unpartizan. It will avoid as much as it can the assumption of a propagandistic tone—propaganda understood as being the unfairly one-sided presentation of controversial opinion, overlooking the good points of opposed views and evidence damaging to one's own.

A simple condemnation of fascism and communism and declaration in favor of the "middle way" is perhaps good-hearted; but in itself it is surely futile. We do positively reject the notion of a unitary act of reform. We oppose the totalitarian state, dictatorship and violent revolution as means or as ends. Except to those who believe a priori that any paper which does not fight for the socialist revolution and the ownership of productive property by society in general is by that very fact fascist, we will prove in action our opposition to fascism and to other imperialisms, in America, in Germany, in Italy, in Spain, in Japan, or wherever else they threaten. No less emphatic is our repudiation of revolutionary Marxian communism, which clearly and directly infringes on Christian belief and which merits condemnation on many other grounds. But there will be no red-baiting on the Left, nor any goblin-hunting on the Right. We will try to deal impartially and charitably with advocates of all systems and believers in anything. We want to see incorporated the good of opposed systems in our own, and to steal the truth even from the pocket of the devil. Thus, in sociology THE COMMONWEAL is inescapably reformist. It will be our constant duty, as affairs progress and choices change, to make this a positive and hopeful position. Our social purpose has been called "personalist," and this is to express the priority of human beings over property and institutions. We desire the constant betterment of the relationship between men and God and among men themselves. This progress can be fostered directly among men, as well as indirectly through institutions. No one knows exactly what institutions would grow up to implement greater charity, but human relationships must never be sacrificed to doctrinaire tenets about institutions, whether they are the existing ones of nationalism and capitalism, or the more hypothetical ones of socialism and fascism.

THE COMMONWEAL recognizes the immense and essential importance of movements among the industrial workers, farm laborers and the underprivileged generally. It is primarily to improve and make just the condition of these sections of society that social change is desired and is necessary. It is also primarily from these groups that the genius and strength for social change must be expected. Constructive development of the social framework cannot be imposed by persons or parties whose position and interest lie outside the classes whose betterment is most needed. Genuine reform, if it comes, must proceed from within, and those who really will help it, if it comes, will undoubtedly be found identified with the groups which the reform revivifies. Labor organization, consumer and producer cooperation, the distribution of power and property among individuals and among regions, the preservation and use of natural resources, alteration in the condition and meaning of ownership, change in party alignment and governmental function—detailed acts and tendencies which affect America's social structure—we will study with humility and sincerity, trying to find how they add to or detract from a human and Christian social justice.

IN ADDITION to expressing the views of the editorial staff and the authors of special articles and reviews, the new COMMONWEAL will function

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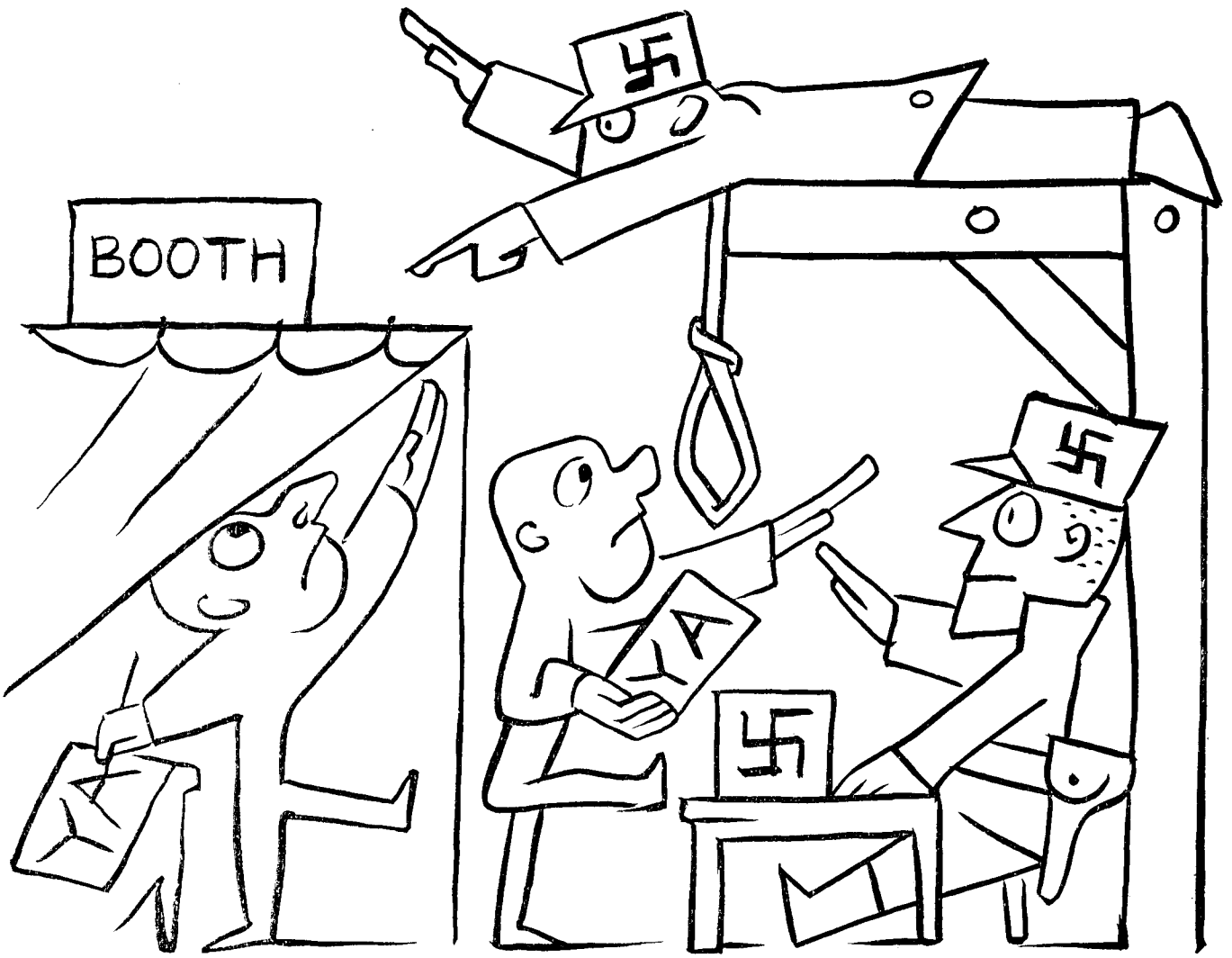

PLEBISCITE IN AUSTRIA

as a clearing-house for the integration of the ideas of a number of experts in various fields. For the editors feel that it is highly desirable to be in touch with a far wider range of the best available knowledge than is possible through the staff members of a single magazine. These contributing editors, however, should in no sense be held responsible for the views expressed in our editorial columns. Among those who have already consented to collaborate actively are Mary Kolars, John J. O'Connor and John F. McCormick, whose loyal and enlightened efforts have contributed immeasurably to the unbroken activity of THE COMMONWEAL. This testifies to a continuity that is further marked by the inclusion of many others whose names are familiar to the readers of THE COMMONWEAL. The following list of contributing editors will be expanded to give our readers the benefit of the widest range of expert knowledge, and such expansion will be announced.

WILLIAM AGAR
DONALD ATTWATER
HERBERT C. F. BELL
JOHN GILLAND BRUNINI
BARRY BYRNE
RUTH KATHERINE BYRNS
JOHN C. CORT
MARY KOLARS
MAURICE LAVANOUX
ELIZABETH LYNSKEY
JOHN F. MCCORMICK
HARRY MCNEILL
JOHN J. O'CONNOR
WILLIAM O'MEARA
R. DANA SKINNER
DANIEL SULLIVAN
JAMES VAUGHAN
DANIEL C. WALSH
JAMES J. WALSH

WE HAVE all heard of Thomas Nast and his campaign against Tammany; we remember Raemakers and Rollin Kirby in the old New York *World*. *Punch's* famous "Dropping the Pilot," the political drawings in *Simplicissimus*, all the tradition of effective caricature comes to mind as we institute Jean Charlot's cartoons in THE COMMONWEAL. And one realizes, when one thinks back over it, that a cartoon is, in its essence, a

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stimulus, a sting, an intellectual "prick of conscience," the purpose of which is to make us see and feel the more clearly some injustice, some piece of human folly. Cartoons must be bitter, must exaggerate, must forget the overtones of a situation, else they become either sententious or just plain silly. And so it is with high hope that we publish our first cartoon—hope that it and its successors will truly jolt our readers into a more sharp realization of what is happening in the world, toward so much of which our moral senses become dulled, lose their cutting edge—hope that neither it nor its successors will arouse anger or hatred of persons, but rather wrath at injustice and folly. "J. C." is, as has been said, Jean Charlot, friend of Claudel and Maritain, French painter of Mexican subjects, Catholic member of an artistic group that includes Orozco and Rivera, now a resident of California. When he was asked to supply a few cartoons in lighter vein, Charlot sent some, and wrote, "They are not as funny as you suggested, but the situation of our world today is not funny either. . . ."

Sit In Strikes

ON THE evening of April 1, the employees of several power plants in the Flint, Michigan, area, owned by the Consumers Power Company (a Commonwealth and Southern subsidiary) took possession of these plants in a "sit down" strike against the company. The essential difference between this strike and others of the same sort is that the Consumers employees continued to operate the plants, and gave assurances that the public's interest in power production would be protected. A conference between company representatives and union officials was at once arranged by Governor Murphy for Monday, April 4. At this conference the immediate questions involved were satisfactorily settled, and the company resumed control of its plants. This brief account of a significant development in strike technique leaves out any consideration of the grievances of the striking union, which are complex, and the justice of which it is impossible for us to appraise. They are further complicated by a three-cornered, inter-union dispute. The important aspect of the matter is that in an action which involves a basic concept of ownership rights in productive property, the rights of the consuming public have been explicitly recognized by Governor Murphy—"Strikers will not be allowed to endanger health and safety by pulling power switches"—and implicitly recognized by the C.I.O. union, which continued to operate the plants. So long as the public's interest is recognized, the question at issue becomes very clearly one between the ownership right of labor in productive property and the ownership rights in the same property of absentee capital. Michigan's solution of this special case serves to bring the fundamental problem of formulating a new concept of property into more bold relief.

The Vatican and Austria

THE WORLD is taken aback by the current dispute between officials of the Vatican and certain members of the Austrian hierarchy. In the face of the tendency toward increasing centralization the ordinary observer is puzzled that such differences of opinion should arise in a body like the Roman Catholic Church, which is universally admired for the perfection of its organization. It should not be oversurprising that Church authorities still seem to differ on the best manner of dealing with the dangers feared in the Nazi domination of Central Europe. The American press has centered its attention on the disavowal of the Austrian bishops' letter published in *l'Osservatore Romano* and the excoriation of the action of the Austrian bishops contained in an unofficial broadcast from the Vatican in German, which was quoted at length in the New York *Times* and other journals. It has not been widely noted that this very broadcast embodies a well-founded distinction, clearly reiterated in Cardinal Innitzer's statement in *l'Osservatore* and always emphasized by the Church, which is the key to this and many other questions of "politics." For it deplored the fact that "constituted guardians of sacred ethics" should "use their religious and ethical authority to convince the faithful of the truth of certain statements about purely practical matters of political and social life, even when these statements and the facts underlying them are judged differently by many thoughtful and competent people. It is not part of the duties of ecclesiastical authority to measure and evaluate the economic and political achievements of governments. No Catholic need feel that his conscience obliges him to accept such judgments as though they were part of Church teachings or to base the exercise of his political rights on them."

Teacher Is Wonderful

By HARRY SYLVESTER

IT WAS cool in the shadows, warm in the light, as the children went to school. On every side were mountains but at noon the town was all in the sun. Now, at morning, the walls and cobbled pavement still held coolness from the night, although the sun was white and strong. Felice and Natalya skipped expertly over the cobbles, their already long, black hair gathered into small, tight buns at the back of their heads and shining as though oiled.

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Like many of the Mexican schools this one had been an old convent, and the faded, pastel masonry of the outside was weathered and broken in places, but inside the rooms were all neat and new with white, fresh plaster and varnished desks.

The teacher, the Señorita Flores, was a handsome young woman with fierce, dark eyes, who today wore a dark, tight-fitting dress with just the hint of a uniform to it. She was busy about her desk when Felice and Natalya came in, two more bright, olive-colored faces in the broken stream of children that entered the room.

The children talked in subdued voices with occasional side-glances at Señorita Flores. Presently, after consulting her new, American wrist-watch, the Señorita rang a small bell on her desk and the children grew quiet. She rang it again and they rose and stood by their desks. When the silence was again sufficiently impressive, she rang the bell a third time and the children chanted, their bright, open faces eager in the windowed morning light. With bright, uplifted faces they chanted: "There is no God." The Señorita permitted a faint smile to curve her chiseled mouth. Then she rang the bell again and the children sat down to begin the day's work.

They were very serious about it. For some time they had all been impressed by their teacher's presence and quiet, forceful way of speaking. They liked also her way of dress, so similar to that of the American tourists. The discipline in her class was always good and she had the reputation of being the most popular teacher.

Now she walked quietly around the room while the children worked over an arithmetic test. Pausing near where Felice and Natalya sat, Señorita Flores said: "And what are you doing these nice afternoons, Felice?"

"Oh, we play with our dolls," Felice said, looking at teacher with a clear, open gaze.

"Yes, we play house," Natalya added shyly.

Teacher passed on with a thin, not too approving smile. Natalya looked at Felice and the little girls raised their eyebrows and puffed out their cheeks.

The local superintendent came into the class during the hour given to Civics and Government. He affected *pince-nez* such as he had seen American superintendents wear, with a long, black ribbon attached to them. The Señorita Flores put on a show for him by calling on Natalya and Felice, since they were the youngest in the class and its prodigies, being, respectively, eight and nine years old.

"Now, tell us all, Natalya," teacher said, "what is the highest authority?"

"The State is the highest authority, teacher."

"Why is the State higher than the family?"

"Because without the State we would have nothing and would not even know what was right and what was wrong."

"That is very good, Natalya," Señorita Flores said. "Now, Felice, tell us why the State is higher than God."

"Because there is no God, teacher."

"I want the whole class to repeat that," the Señorita Flores said.

"The State is higher than God because there is no God," the class faithfully chanted.

From the back of the class the superintendent beamed and the Señorita Flores felt a warm glow suffuse her heart. When the children went home for lunch, the superintendent came forward to congratulate the Señorita.

"You have done remarkably well in such a short time," he said. "I daresay it is your own personality." He paused to smile and the Señorita, glancing sidewise, nevertheless permitted a smile to illumine her own handsome face.

"They think you are wonderful," the superintendent said, "and I can hardly blame them," he gallantly added.

"Oh, it is just that they are unusually intelligent," the Señorita Flores said, a little distrait at the stream of praise. "They are very receptive."

"Ah, but you are too modest," the superintendent said. "Who else could have made such headway in such a short time against the centuries-old superstitions and fables these poor children have been subjected to?"

Later that afternoon, when school was over for the day, the superintendent was walking across the Plaza in front of the cathedral when he saw Felice and Natalya coming out of the great, twin-spired building.

"Well," he said in his best professional manner, "this is indeed a strange place to find you coming out of. What have you been doing in there?"

"Oh, we have been to First Communion class, Señor," Natalya explained.

"But only this morning I heard you say that there was no God?"

"But that was in school, Señor," Natalya said.

"Then you do believe there is a God?" The superintendent's voice rose querulously.

"Oh, yes," Felice said. "In class, though, we say there is none because we are expected to and because we would not like to hurt the feelings of our teacher, the Señorita Flores."

"Teacher is wonderful," Natalya said. The superintendent glanced quickly at her to see if the little girl were laughing at him. Her eyes were round and wide and innocent. He looked quickly back to Felice. Her eyes were also round and wide and innocent.

"Teacher is wonderful," Felice said.

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Terror in Vienna

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

WE HAVE passed through a week of harrowing experiences, still so vivid in the memory that I can hardly bring myself to write about them. It is one thing to see blood spilled, and another to watch the soul of man writhe in torment and then die. On the fateful Wednesday evening when Dr. Schuschnigg announced that Austria was to pass judgment on its government and its future, I happened to be touring the provinces with an Austrian journalist. In so far as we were concerned the news dispelled any illusions we may have entertained concerning the fateful gravity of the situation. A blow was to be struck in favor of Austrian independence, but it could hardly succeed unless somewhere in Europe a promise of substantial aid had been given.

Information concerning that point was reserved to a handful of people. But we could see—and this the next day's travel was to make even clearer—that in so far as the country itself was concerned, there was no room for doubt concerning the decision. The government had been everything but popular. It was based on an attempt to exercise a "Catholic dictatorship" in a notoriously anticlerical state, and such stability as it possessed was the result far less of its own innate strength than of the intense hatred which separated its enemies of the Right and Left. Nevertheless after Berchtesgaden a kind of miracle had happened. The Chancellor's plucky stand for independence and his promise to modify the rigid financial policies of his government had evoked a wave of popularity which was constantly growing more impressive.

There were Nazi demonstrations in almost all towns, but nowhere excepting possibly in Styria did they serve any other purpose than to show that the strength of Hitler's support had been greatly exaggerated. Workers, including many embittered former Social Democrats, were flocking to the Schuschnigg colors, and it seemed quite possible that in two weeks the gulf between the Catholic party and labor would be healed. Later on I was to regret having gone on this reconnoitering trip, but the fact that I went at least enables me to declare without any hesitancy whatsoever that the situation was fully under the government's control, that the plebiscite was being organized with the utmost fairness, and that every sign pointed to a severe Nazi defeat. All stories and rumors to the contrary are fabrications. It is true that some pressure was brought to bear on civil servants, and that the government was in control of most of the instruments of propaganda. But in every other respect the road to the polls was so unobstructed that one had difficulty in realizing that Austria was not a democratic state.

We drove on through mountainous and sparsely settled country, so that we arrived in Graz late at night on March 11, utterly unaware that the government had yielded to Hitler's ultimatum. There we ran headlong into a delirious Nazi demonstration. The car was surrounded by a crowd of schoolboys carrying any number of assorted weapons. "Jews! Jews!" resounded on all sides, and it was only by dint of displaying a measure of good feeling which I did not possess that we were able to extricate ourselves and leave for Vienna despite the hour and a blinding snowstorm. Almost every mile of what seemed the longest trip on record was interrupted with shouts. Boys armed with rifles and bayonets leaped from the roadside and insisted upon inspecting our passports and our political opinions. Once we lost our bearings and instead of keeping to the main highway drove up to a Franciscan monastery. When the error had been corrected, there gathered round us in that darkness a band of armed youngsters the oldest of whom was seventeen. They insisted upon searching the car for "treasures" which they thought we were escorting to safety.

At last we reached Vienna at five in the morning. The city, which had never boasted of more than a few thousand active Nazis, was asleep excepting for a small group of the faithful still congregated before the German tourist bureau in the Kaerntnerstrasse, inside which a huge portrait of Hitler was banked with flowers. But there was little time for slumber. An hour later German bombers began to "demonstrate" over the city. They swooped down so close to the housetops that every other sound was drowned out. Round about, groups of high school boys began to mount guard. Directly across the street from us, for example, two urchins in knee pants stood with rifles and bayonets looking for all the world like boy scouts ran amuck. The vanguard of the German army, seated in trucks and armed to the teeth, began to roar through the streets. Terrorization was in progress—the method adopted for enforcing submission by creating what can be defined as absolute insecurity.

In order to understand what this means one must remember that probably less than a third of Vienna's population can qualify as German according to Nazi principles. For all these people the borders had been hermetically sealed the night before. The coup had come so suddenly that

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Austria was a huge trap. By eight in the morning every resident American in the city had a swarm of visitors asking the impossible. They begged for aid in cajoling passports out of the embassy or in being smuggled out of the country. I have never seen so much despair and frenzy in all my life. Meanwhile more and more thousands of Germans were brought to Vienna. Police, black shirts and brown shirts, soldiers and officials—all these were impressive, but most striking of all were the masses of organized school children brought down by train and truck to demonstrate when Hitler arrived. Soon the otherwise quiet and dignified city became a veritable bedlam. All day and all night the roar continued, rendering sleep an incredible luxury.

The pogrom followed. Jewish shops were plundered and smashed. Houses were entered and ransacked. Individuals were pursued on the streets. Property was confiscated without a moment's warning. Whole streets looked as if a tornado had passed along. But far worse than all this was the horrible despair which unnerved hundreds of thousands—a despair so omnipresent that suicide was a normal recourse. People stabbed or shot themselves to death on the very streets. I shall say no more about it excepting this: an American monsignor and I walked along together wondering whether even Christianity can subdue the beast in man. Cruelty surrounded us, massed, exultant and victorious. I know now what Calvary means.

Catholics, too, felt the brunt of the attack. It must be conceded that the Church in Austria bore a thousand visible signs of degeneration. Generations of living out of the hand of the State had engendered a laxity and a softness hard to understand if one hales from a country where the Faith has been defended. But since 1933 regeneration had made progress. A group of vigorous young priests and laymen had put their shoulders to the wheel, and things were slowly moving in the right direction. Today any dreams they may have cherished of a religious restoration are at an end in so far as the corporate life of society is concerned. Many of them are in prison. Others managed by a hairbreadth to escape the country. The careers of thousands are wrecked. The Church must now learn anew out of the school of darkness.

Nevertheless, when Hitler entered the city, the bells of St. Stephen's Cathedral rang out in welcome. I do not wish to judge harshly, but I doubt whether in all history there is a more shameless incident. It was for many of my acquaintances who sensed the full moral ignominy of what was happening round about, just as if Christ had really made a pact with Satan in the hour of temptation. Nevertheless this incident is offset in my memory by the unforgettable heroism of many, priests and people, who risked all rather than betray the Faith in which charity takes precedence over everything.

Then there is the world of beauty and gentleness, or urbanity and artistic excellence, which has looked upon Vienna as its home. Down upon it all the tides of barbarism descended, with goose-step and primitive mummery. On Sunday morning I went as usual to the Hofkapelle to hear the boys sing high Mass. But when the priest ascended the altar there was no singing—the streets were so blocked with German Nazis that the choir had been unable to get through. There were tears in the eyes of almost everyone. I thought of what Grey had said in 1914: "The lights are going out all over Europe, and it will be a long time until they burn again." This silence in the Hofkapelle, what was it other than a symbol of the gloom into which we have gone and are perchance going? Children's voices were not raised in song. Instead youngsters patrolled the streets with bayonets.

I was so shaken by this experience that for hours I walked about aimlessly, hardly noticing the shouting and the roaring and the click of steel. All this was merely external. What mattered was not what had come, but what had gone—the values of Christendom no longer earned but merely inherited, now to be struggled for tenaciously again through long generations with quiet heroism, self-sacrifice and martyrdom. These values must be rescued not only through the present difficult times but through the even more perilous days ahead. For there is nobody over here now who doubts that Europe is on the brink of irreparable disaster.

I can only appeal to the generous heart of America as best I can for immediate aid. Every cent expended on relief work now will not only mitigate human suffering but will save minds and hands for the Christian regeneration of society. It is so great an opportunity that it is difficult to think of anything comparable. Should these words of mine awaken any measure of response, the experience of having lived through that week in Vienna will have been worth while. I am not pleading for humanity in the abstract, but for dozens upon dozens of individuals whose only offense is that they are partly of Jewish blood—as Christ was of Jewish blood—or that they have loved the Church more than all else.[1]

There is one thing more. The German war machine which rumbled through Austria is a surprisingly efficient organization. It may not be everything the Imperial army was in 1914, but it has discipline and equipment. To it the conquest of Austria is of tremendous advantage. In all human probability there would have been neither such an army nor such a conquest without two great factors—Hitlerism and a certain "national

[1] Contributions should be sent to Most Reverend Stephen J. Donahue, Treasurer, Committee for Catholic Refugees from Germany, 123 2nd Street, New York, N. Y.

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Catholicism." The second prepared the way both in Germany and in Austria. I think we must look both facts squarely in the face. It is foolhardy to deny that the Nazi creed occupies the same central position in the world outlook that Bolshevism did after the war. And just as certain extremist Catholics turned much too far to the Left under the impact of Communism, so others have moved Rightward without reservations under the spell of chauvinism and Hitlerism.

Why this should be when Christian principle is so plain and uncompromising, remains somewhat of a mystery even after one has tried to study the evolution of modern ideas. There must be a fault somewhere not in the structure of our social ethics but in our pedagogy. America still has time and opportunity to discover where the mistake lies and to rectify it. That having been done, we may not be able to halt the triumph of destructive forces, but can at least prevent their emergence to victory through the Catholic gate. That may seem like a fairly remote and impractical program. I can assure you that no other course of action would be comparably beneficent.

". . . the Price of Liberty"

By VIDA D. SCUDDER

DOES everyone, I wonder, have seasons when his mind is mischievously perverse? When he finds himself painfully sensitive to truth and beauty in convictions he has disapproved, and something rises within, pressing him with disconcerting urgency to burn what he has adored and to adore what he has burned? I suspect most of us have such an experience—or should I say, such a temptation?—now and then. No one should covet it, for it drives us out from the snug little houses we have erected from our assumptions, into buffeting winds. These destroy our slogans. They blow away those comforting myths, for which Georges Sorel, long before the days of Stuart Chase or Thurman Arnold, pointed out that men were ready to die. Such invasions are fraught with peril; they may drive us into the arid No Man's Land of cynical negation. But a person subject to them can hardly help himself, and, making the best of it, may discover that they have value. For they can perform a great feat, they can startle us into real thinking.

We are all inclined to cling so stubbornly and mechanically to our dogmas that these become desiccated. To use my pet quotation from Milton, a man may be a heretic in the truth. Servile submission to one's own past convictions is a peculiarly insidious type of idolatry. It is a sobering thought that one may quite possibly profess a true doctrine which is not a truth to one, but a fetish. Suddenly to find yourself within your opponent's mind, sharing his thoughts, feeling his emotions! It is a grand method of making one's own mind more flexible, more gentle; it may even be worth cultivating as a habit helping toward the difficult attainment of unity with one's fellows. Yet the dangers are as patent as the advantages; they are partly those of the proverbial donkey, starving between two bundles of equally attractive hay. After all, one must select some nourishing opinions on which to feed.

The sort of inner conflict I have in mind was probably never so common as today. Issues before us are rarely clear-cut (I am thinking less of fundamentals than of applications). My little way, while arguing vigorously on one side, of finding myself suddenly changing places with my adversary, causes amusement to my friends; but I fear it may become more usual. For where is escape into certitude offered? If western civilization is to survive—the "if" is more than rhetorical—it will become both inwardly and outwardly not more simple but more intricate. We were brought up in the nineteenth-century colleges on an old formula of Herbert Spencer's: Life moves from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, from the simple to the complex. I have observed that it behaves in just that way.

Shuffling my morning mail, examples of perplexities are under my fingers. Do I or do I not approve as a Christian of a blockade on Japan? Am I an isolationist or an adherent of collective security, with Roosevelt and the Communists? Should a pacifist endorse sanctions? I can argue forcefully on both sides. Should the Civil Liberties Union denounce the NRA for limiting the free speech of the employer? Let these instances suffice. Which side shall I take, in many a question, when I perform the duty incumbent on every free American citizen, and write to my Representative?

"Free": the word brings me to my subject. Of late I am experiencing a vehement distaste for freedom. This distresses and surprises me. Have I not all my life sung "Sweet Land of Liberty" with emotion? Am I not on the National Committee of the aforesaid Civil Liberties Union? Has my heart not leaped at Vergil's word to Cato as Dante and he emerge from Hell on the shores of the Purgatorial Mount?

> "Libertà va cercando, ch'e si cara
> Come sa chi per Lei vita refiuta,"—

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a passage in which Dante rather curiously aligns spiritual with political liberty. I have deplored Fascism and political Communism with the best, giving thanks that I was neither German nor Russian. I have in younger years disseminated among Italian immigrants a translation of the Declaration of Independence, with faith in its almost magic power. What is this queer revulsion?

It is partly the fault of Stuart Chase ("The Tyranny of Words") and Thurman Arnold ("The Folk-lore of Capitalism"), who are forcing me to take down my cherished formulae and give them a shaking. Surely never was a more tyrannous, a more evasive word than "freedom," and many are the crimes committed in its sacred name. But still more responsible is my own experience. I am hating with intense hatred the necessity upon me to make constant decisions. In earlier professional years, tight held to a schedule, I chafed restlessly; now that scheduled days are over, I chafe worse. How I dislike planning the use of my time, how I loathe managing my own affairs! True, I resent having anyone else try to manage them for me; and there you are! Free as air, I feel myself floating in a void, I want to be in a metaphorical train, auto, airplane, carried in one direction. I have plenty of time now to revise my old ideas, but I preferred taking them for granted. Oh, for a routine relentlessly imposed!

I suspect it may be good for me to have my old supports removed. But it is an acid test, and I am surer and surer that freedom is a discipline rather than a privilege. After all, that is what Dante learned. He, as I said, seemed to align the political and the spiritual. But I wish in the rest of these reflections to avoid the political aspects of the matter, and to consider the personal only; if the two will consent not to get mixed up. If I can keep control, not an allusion to capitalism, Communism or Fascism shall enter the ensuing paragraphs. For what I am vitally concerned with is my own unreasonable state of mind.

The popular cry is against me. Progressive Schools assert the right of the kindergarten child to follow untrammeled his own sweet impulses. The Small Employer, rioting at Washington, snarls his distaste for a controlling government; and the "Intellectual" (save the mark!) habitually dismisses loyalty to any creedal authority as beneath contempt. Within me, in each case, something sympathizes, responds; to be met, in hurtling clash almost audible to the spirit's ear, by this craving for something to obey. There is nothing for it but to call a halt, and betake me to examining what Stuart Chase calls my "referents." To analyze my formulae: I sigh; that is always a task to avoid when possible.

Is this craving for authority a temperamental peculiarity of mine? I doubt it. You may say what you like about coercion; unrestricted freedom is a devastating nuisance. Envisage a society without any external controls, and you envisage an anarchist hell. How young people resent restraint! But the post-war generation, as Aldous Huxley is telling us, tried out self-expression to the limit and found themselves plunged in helpless misery.

One day last October, I lay on sun-baked slopes in a mountain wood, looking up into delicate white birches, swaying with exquisite grace in a gentle wind. Silently the golden leaves detached themselves, and with soft erratic waverings floated down to the waiting earth. I watched them find that freedom toward which they had always strained, tugging at their restraining twigs whenever breezes blew. Liberty theirs at last—but liberty to die. For living freedom is that of the leaf tight fastened, with the sap of the tree of which it is a product and a part vibrating through it, controlling it, till it reaches its mature being, its perfect form. Here is experience, not theory. "The sun has no liberty; a dead leaf has much. Its liberty will come—with its corruption," says Ruskin. "Free because imbound," is a good phrase of Wordsworth's. Poets of course have always known the weariness of "uncharted freedom." Yet curiously enough they have loved freedom with a consuming passion. Always the paradox, always the conflict!

I am led to consider the social scene, with a view to ascertaining when liberty really obtains, or should obtain. I feel the need of a surrounding social order that shall, like the atmosphere, exert on me pressure so even that I shall not be conscious it exists. Is it because our present order is breaking up, and we consequently feel maladjustment of such pressure, that we are all restless? I suspect in any case that we need readjustment rather than removal.

Considering further, I perceive large areas in which pressure is still even; areas in which freedom does not exist. They tend to increase. Progressive civilization imposes more and more restrictions. When I was a child I could cross a street pretty much when I chose; now I wait for a green light. Liberty is driven from one region after another; the workman becomes a cog in a machine, the corporation salaries the once independent employer. Whether we like it or not, social control is bound to increase all along the line. And taking the long view, such control is the only reasonable guarantee of our well-being. I shall be able to govern my actions less and less.

A sad prospect; yet already over nearly the whole surface of life, we take conformity for granted. Chesterton somewhere gravely recommended sitting on the floor to eat one's dinner; he said he often did it, and it gave him a delightful feeling. Now obviously to eat on the floor would be an assertion of freedom; but somehow I don't yearn to do it. It would be the worst kind

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of bondage for it would enslave me to a foolish impulse, and divert my attention to trivialities. I am well content within the etiquette enclosing me in an invisible prison. Often—not always—rebellion may be cheap and deceptive business.

At this point I make an important discovery. Freedom is not a good in itself. Because we assume it to be, we talk a lot of claptrap. Freedom is at best only a condition and a means, and to mistake means for ends is a mischievous though popular pastime. Reasons for liking or disliking liberty vary. You may long to live under authority because you have a servile nature, or are lazy—my case, I fear. Or you may so long because you know that, for you at least, authority protects the only sort of freedom that you value.

"Make me a captive, Lord, and so I shall be free," sings the hymn. Liberty must be scrutinized in the light of the end to be gained by it. Its sweetness and its ultimate worth are not in escape from restraint but in power bestowed for self-realization. To speak intimately, I can never be sure that I am free so long as I am in any sense dependent on circumstance. Let me then welcome the pressure of poverty, illness or age, that so I may realize the buoyancy of the unchained spirit. Inwardly victorious over these, I am within hailing distance of the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Here, as always, sacrifice is the cost of achievement. Does not the same law apply, with discrimination, to the willing acceptance, indeed to the furthering, of effective social control? I think so. Shelley did not agree with me. In "Prometheus Unbound" he stated that man could only be "king over himself" when he should become "equal, unclassed, tribeless and nationless." I think Shelley was mistaken.

Aware of the weight of the atmosphere, we should perish. The truth seems to be that extension of the areas in which conduct is purely automatic is the law of advance. The savage, unhampered by our restrictions, was much less free than the modern man. True freedom is a fine and subtle matter, incompatible with concentration of energy on the external plane. The college teacher may rightly covet a share in the government of his institution; but he serves committees at sacrifice just so far of his vocation as a scholar. I cannot resist alluding to the picture of life in the Soviet Republic as presented in the Webbs' big book on Russia. From present accounts, there would seem to be little enough freedom in Soviet land, but the picture stands, as a picture. And when I hear people decrying the regimentation under Communism, my mind reverts to it, with pity. For these miserable citizens, according to the Webbs, spend all their spare time in what we call self-government—or in other words, in arranging their affairs so that they might live. As a consumer, a man ran his cooperative; as a trade-unionist, his industry. Decisions on local affairs, on national affairs, claimed his vote, his presence; his every interest was represented in a meeting. Sometimes the city in which I live seems a little like that, but things are not quite so bad. That would have been a nation of slaves. Luckily it seems to have existed in the Webbs' imagination.

Might we then, I repeat, describe progress as the gradual surrender to automatic control, of activities which once had to be self-regulating? Is here, perhaps, the road to freedom? It behooves me to be careful, for in spite of myself I see a political implication, but I turn away my eyes. I do not mean acceptance of a dictator; such progress should be voluntary; but might it not be communal as well as personal? I do not think H. G. Wells a very profound person, but a phrase of his has always lingered with me, in which he speaks of "those spendthrift liberties which waste Liberty."

I however am speaking personally. And I dare to hope that my reaction from freedom is not due to cowardice or ignorance. I believe that we invoke the Goddess of Liberty quite too casually, and our appeals to her often sound hollow in my ears. Worth-while freedom can be gained only by progressive surrender of prerogatives and privilege. And I know "for sure," as the children say, that such freedom when won is less a pleasure than a discipline. It implies stern duty; that is why I must jealously defend it against dictators.

One of two concepts governs our attitude: that of Rousseau, who viewed liberty as an innate right, or that of Dante, who knew it as an achievement. I stand with Dante. The motto of his great poem (shall I add, of the Church and the Scriptures?) is "Cercando Liberta." On the summit of the Mount of Purgatory, after disciplines prolonged, comes a great moment. Vergil, *dolcissimo patre,* says to him: "Henceforth take thine own pleasure for guide. . . . Free upright and whole is thy will; over thyself I crown and miter thee." Soon Vergil departs, and Dante mourns; but he is not left without authority. For here comes Beatrice, and through her eyes shines compelling power to sweep him upward among the circling spheres. In what sense is Dante free in Paradise? I wonder; I am not sure. I was never there.

These reflections need have nothing to do with the New Deal or with social planning, but they have I think a great deal to do with my queer revulsion against uncontrolled freedom. I suppose we shall never attain true liberty till we have climbed to a recaptured Eden; and when we are there we shall realize the boon, in abandoning ourselves to pure adoration. I said that I would not be political, but I perceive that I am becoming mystical. It is time to end these random broodings. Alas! I must decide what to do next!

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Houses of Hospitality

By DOROTHY DAY

IN THE Middle Ages when one out of every four was leprous, there were two thousand leper houses run by religious in France. alone. This is the startling and thought-provoking statement made in Farrow's book, "Damien, the Leper." That statement has not been contested. It may be horrifying to make such a comparison, but inasmuch as one out of every five workers today is unemployed or on work relief, the catastrophe which has visited us is comparable.

Unemployment is the gravest problem in the country today. It is immediate, so it is more pressing than the problem of war and peace. It means hunger and cold and sickness right now, so it is more immediate a problem than the unionizing of workers. In fact the unionizing of workers cannot get on while thirteen million men are unemployed and those employed are hanging on to their jobs like grim death and not willing to make any forward steps which would jeopardize those jobs. And we contend that the kind of shelter afforded these unattached unemployed is liable to make them leprous in soul and utterly incapable of working for sustenance or salvation.

There are thousands of men sheltered in the lodging houses of New York City, run by the city, and countless other thousands sitting up all night in missions and flop houses and roaming the streets. As the weather gets warmer you may see them sleeping in the shelter of buildings, in areaways, in subways, along the waterfront. They crawl into their holes by night, and by day come out to tramp from one end of the island to the other in search of food. Every other city—Pittsburgh, Boston, Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Louis—has the same problem.

Peter Maurin, whose idea it was to start the *Catholic Worker,* began it with a simple program which called for round-table discussions, houses of hospitality and farming communes. Before the depression, he predicted it. During the depression he constantly stressed the problem of unemployment. He is still journeying from one end of the country to the other, speaking of a new social order wherein man is human to man and which can be built up on the foundation of the works of mercy and voluntary poverty.

He himself has been a transient worker and an unemployed worker. He spent twenty years traveling through the United States and Canada, doing the manual labor which built this country. And it is due to his constant indoctrinating, as he calls it, that groups in New York, Boston, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee, Troy, St. Louis, Houma, Louisiana, and Windsor, Ontario, have started what Peter himself called from the beginning houses of hospitality, where those in need can receive food, clothing and shelter, and hold round table discussions, which point to the solution of problems. Peter is only doing what the great Saint Peter called for—working for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein justice dwelleth.

In New York, the unemployed come from all over, seeking work. They are not all single men. There are the married, as well as the sons of the family who leave home in order that they may not be a burden on those that remain. There are whole families migrating. There are young married couples. There are even lone women and girls.

Peter has always pointed out that according to canon law, all bishops should be running hospices, or houses of hospitality. But now, thinking in terms of state responsibility rather than personal responsibility, those in need are turned over to agencies, to the city or the state. There are isolated instances of hospices of the homeless of course. I have visited Father Dempsey's huge hospice in St. Louis, for instance. Father Dempsey was criticized for "bringing all the bums in the United States to St. Louis." But nevertheless his work was well supported and he was able to carry on his work for many, many years. There is a splendid hospice run by the St. Vincent de Paul Society in San Francisco, where a small charge of $.15 is made. There is a day shelter besides where men can remain during inclement weather. We believe of course that an absolutely free place is necessary for the wanderer not having any funds or not knowing the ropes. I have heard of a hospice in Philadelphia which I wish to visit, and doubtless there are many more. I hope readers of this article will let me know of others throughout the country, run under Catholic auspices.

I have visited all the hospices run by *Catholic Worker* groups, naturally, and they all have the same difficulties and the same problems and are all run on the same lines. They all started with no funds at all. A small group got together, decided they wanted a headquarters for propaganda and meetings, and rented a store for $10 or $15 a month. None of them ever knew where the next month's rent was coming from. Usually there was no money for paint or soap or mops or beds or stoves or cups. But little by little these things were contributed. Most of them began fearfully and are continuing fearfully. If any of them ever thought they were going to have to feed the numbers they are feeding, they would

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never have had the courage to start. (Oh, we of little faith!) Most of them hesitated along for several years before starting the endless task of feeding those who came. For as soon as the feeding began—as soon as the mood of hospitality began to make itself felt—lines formed at the door, and continued day after day.

In New York, our breakfast line, which began with a single friendly pot of coffee on the stove in the store where we hold our meetings, grew and grew until now we serve breakfast to approximately 1,000 men. They begin forming on the line at four-thirty in the morning. The door is not opened until six and then the work goes on until nine or nine thirty. During the day we have only sixty or so to the other two meals. We have to consider the work of the paper, letter writing, receiving visitors, taking care of those under our roof which number about fifty in the city and fifteen in the country. (In the summer there will be about fifty there too.)

In Boston they feed 250 men a day; in Pittsburgh 200; in Detroit, 400; St. Louis, 200; and so on. The numbers are not so large, but if the reader will just contemplate saying to himself, "Two or three friends and I will undertake to feed 350 people a meal every day," not just for one day but indefinitely, stretching out month after month, year after year, he would be aghast. Just try it. He would not think it possible by himself of course, nor would he trust the Lord to fall in with his seemingly presumptuous plans.

Yet if we are thinking in terms of personal responsibility, to those who sit around and say, "Why don't the priests do this or that?" or "Why don't *they* [that indefinite *they*] do this or that?" we should reply, "Why don't *we all?*"

It is really the work of the lay apostolate. In this day of huge parishes, running into thousands of souls (sometimes even 10,000) it is hard to see how the priest can think of undertaking such a work. Bishops used to have personal knowledge and acquaintance with not only all their priests but many of their flock, whereas now the bishop of a large diocese has every moment taken with spiritual duties.

We not only believe that this is the work of the lay apostolate, but we believe that all over the country the faithful should gird up their loins, so to speak, and start two thousand houses. If France could start and continue for a few generations two thousand leper houses, until segregation, combined with the plague, wiped out leprosy, then surely we in the United States ought to be able to open and continue two thousand houses of hospitality and face the prospect of continuing them not only through this generation but until the social order has been reconstructed.

It is a grave emergency. The Holy Father says that the workers of the world are being lost to the Church. If we are all lay apostles and "other Christs" this is our responsibility.

Trade union leaders like John L. Lewis believe that through strong unions, labor leaders in politics, legislation, the thirty-hour week, insurance, taxation, and public works financed through taxation of industrialists rather than of the poor through sales taxes, the unemployed can be reabsorbed and those not reabsorbed can be taken care of.

Perhaps a Christian state could do all these things. But since we are living under only a nominally Christian state, Christians will have to resort to those old-as-the-Church itself methods of the works of mercy through houses of hospitality to care for immediate needs such as food, clothing and shelter.

These needs supplied under Christian auspices would make a startling change in the character of the unemployed. Hope, that most sinned-against of virtues would be restored. Hospices in the shadow of churches would mean a constant recognition of Christ the Worker, Christ our Brother. The priests living in close contact with the poorest of transients and ministering to them, holy Mass, missions, constant indoctrination through Catholic literature, Catholic surroundings—what a change this would make in the outlook of the poor!

As it is now, under the dubious hospitality of the city and state, it is as though God were unknown. There is no reminder to morning and evening prayer. Men have lost the sense of their own dignity, that dignity which they possess because Christ shared their humanity, their unemployment, their dire need.

Worse than that, men become drunken, drug-ridden, vicious and obscene in many cases. These are strong words but when one thinks what mobs are capable of, once their passions are aroused, it must be admitted that in our care for the poor we do nothing to give man the power to control his baser nature which through its black deeds most assuredly merits the hell which Christ died to save us from.

Who are most prominent in caring for transients and unemployed throughout the country? The Workers Alliance with its millions of members is strictly Marxist and materialist in its philosophy, however unformulated. There amongst those masses is the material for revolutionary mobs, and when we consider revolutions in the past, engineered by the few intellectual leaders with a theory of revolution as Lenin called it, when we consider the mass riots in New York in the last century which led to the building of our many armories, we can count on a well-directed mob throughout the country under the influence of whatever Marxist leaders or Fascist leaders that turn up in the future.

Unless—.

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Medicine Men

By JAMES J. WALSH

A GENERATION ago those of us who had the advantage of having been brought up in little towns had an occasional source of entertainment that proved quite interesting as a break in the monotony of small town life without the radio or the movies. It gathered a considerable number of people together and sent most of them home after an hour or two quite satisfied with the interlude. The gathering usually took place, handily enough for all concerned, on a corner of the public square, or somewhere on a vacant lot not far from the center of town.

The first hint of the entertainment in store for the inhabitants that evening came in the afternoon when citizens had their attention called to several Indians in their native garb making their way around town. They were followed—at what was considered a safe distance—by small boys. They were as characteristically glum as Indians were ever supposed to be, but in spite of this the townsfolk with previous experience learned even from this slight hint that we were to have an entertainment that evening.

The *mise-en-scène* was of the simplest. A large wagon carrying a platform, lighted by old-fashioned torches which threw such a lurid light on everything they were supposed to illuminate and belched so much smoke that they succeeded only in darkening the shadows, served as a stage. On it were musicians with several musical instruments, a snare drum, a bass drum, a violin and a cornet. These instruments made enough of not unpleasant noise to attract the attention of most of the townspeople, and besides, for half an hour or so before the show the musicians "doubled in brass" and paraded through the streets of the town gathering in all who could get away from home.

Most of us knew what the show was to be, for we had seen something like it several times before, but with a change in personnel we were quite willing to see it again because with so little else to do with our time we needed the diversion. With the troupe there were usually a couple of singers who sang some of the old-fashioned songs, especially Stephen Foster's airs and ballads.

The one purpose of the entertainment was to gather and hold the crowd until the real master of the show was ready to make his appearance. Usually he wore what has since come to be called a six-gallon hat, suggestive of the wide open spaces of the West, and ordinarily he had on a bizarrely decorated coat and vest, the latter garment so fancifully embroidered that it was sure to attract feminine attention particularly, a factor extremely important for the ultimate success of the show.

This picturesque figure proved to be a good talker who took the crowd into his confidence at once and told them of spending years among the western Indians and cultivating the friendship of the medicine men of the various tribes until finally, after no little difficulty, he succeeded in worming from them the medical secrets that had come down by tradition among the tribes for the cure of various diseases. The Indians, he declared, had acquired their precious knowledge as a result of their intimate contact with nature for generations. This revelation of nature's mysteries enabled them to cure many diseases which the ordinary pale-face physician, without the special knowledge of the red-men, could scarcely be expected to treat at all successfully. For American diseases, he proclaimed, there was need of American remedies.

The paleface medicine man, for such he declared he was by adoption into a tribe, was manifestly intent on just one thing, and that was the alleviation of the suffering of mankind and the relief of disease. Because of his long intimacy with the Indians he had succeeded in compounding a medicine that contained practically all the precious medical secrets gathered by the Indians for hundreds of years. As could be readily understood, this medicine was almost an infallible remedy for ills and ails of all kinds. He assured his audience, who followed him with great intentness, that it was a wonderful cure for nearly every disease under the sun and a few others besides. The virtue of this composition was simply astounding. It was good for "the hair, teeth, and stomach," eminently curative for colds in the winter time, and for summer catarrh as well as asthma, and above all good for indigestion, or as they called it at that time, "dyspepsy." It was simply an invaluable remedy to have around the house because it prevented as well as cured disease. Above all, it was good for children—given in smaller doses of course—and it kept many a household, wise enough to have it on hand, from suffering from diseases rife in other families because they did not know this precious secret for the prevention of all sorts of affections.

This touch about the children stirred mothers' hearts and loosened pocketbooks. Of course there could be no doubt about the Indian origin of the remedy. Did he not have two real Indians with him? Was not that of itself sufficient demonstration of his close relations with the Indians and

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of the opportunities that he had so well taken advantage of to secure the precious materials of which the medicine was composed? Being of plant origin, it could do no harm. What was the use of mentioning the fact that many of the most poisonous drugs which physicians prescribe on occasion are of plant origin?

At first, in spite of his persuasive speech, there was little haste and no urgency to come forward and pay fifty cents for a bottle of this great Indian remedy. Fifty cents had much larger purchasing power in those days than in ours. Village folk hesitated before squandering fifty cents unless they were confident of getting their money's worth. Several men of the troupe had been judiciously planted among the crowd, and they pushed their way forward and asked questions as to their symptoms. They were assured that this was just the remedy for them, and after half a dozen had come forward and planked down their half dollars the townsfolk were willing to buy. The result was a brisk sale.

That was the way they did things in small towns before the days of the radio. We may well pity the poor small-town folk who had to depend on meager means of entertainment and were glad to have them provided even in such primitive fashion. Most of us would have a feeling of congratulation that things were quite different in our time because of the inevitable progress that mankind has made during this last precious generation of ours. Instead of the amateur musicians and the crowd joining in with the old songs, we have Metropolitan Opera singers, famous sopranos and tenors, baritones and bassos of distinction, with an orchestra that is the last word in support of singers and chorus. How great has been the advance in culture since the primitive days of the Indian medicine man and his wandering band of musicians. It must not be forgotten, however, that it was the sale of medicine that "made the ghost walk" regularly for the entertainers. It is still the ballyhoo for medicines of one kind or another that serves to support a number of programs sent out over the air as entertainment.

We are still told in alluring terms how much good this and that medicine may be for all sorts of affections. To have the opportunity to listen to worth-while musical programs, we have to stultify ourselves and practically deny all modern medical progress. To have the privilege of listening to these distinguished singers and musicians we must swallow the insult to our intelligence, together with some of the medicine. The advertising toll provides the funds that pay for these musical presentations just exactly as it did in the little towns of long ago.

A book was written some years ago on "The Funny Things That Cure People," which would have provided a number of suggestions for radio program editors. The book has the story of any number of remedies that worked cures in hundreds and even thousands of cases though they had no genuine physical effect of any kind on human tissues. People were told that the remedies recommended would cure them, and that was enough by the influence of suggestion to have a number of people proceed to get well.

M. Coué, the little druggist from Nancy in France, would have made a wonderful radio announcer. He gave no medicine, but thousands of people went to him every year and somewhat more than half of them were cured or greatly benefited. The one thing he insisted on their doing was to repeat twenty times in the morning when they woke up, "Every day in every way I am feeling better and better." That would not be expected to cure anybody but it literally cured them by the thousands. A great French physician once said that half the people who walk into a doctor's office need to have their minds soothed rather than their bodies treated. Yet for the sake of suggestible people, all the rest of us ought not to be compelled to listen to suggestion poured out over the air for the benefit of the "patent medicine" concerns, as they used to be called.

Saint Thomas of Canterbury

By ROBERT SPEAIGHT

THOMAS BECKET is one of the most puzzling as well as one of the most spectacular of medieval figures. No other period in history could have produced his unique blend of turbulence and gentleness, heroism and obstinacy, ambition and self-abnegation. He has not the perfection or the intelligence of Saint Anselm, the lucidity or the strength of Saint Bernard, the sheer saintliness of Saint Hugh of Lincoln. Yet his réclame was greater than theirs, and today his name and his fate are familiar to every schoolboy.

His character, however, is not so clear; it has perhaps been obscured by the sacrilegious melodrama of his end. It has also been badly damaged by the cynicism and the stupidity of his later biographers as well as by the misinformed panegyrics of his friends. He is a man of many colors and the colors do not always mix easily. He began by being a diplomat of great persuasive-

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ness; then became a civil servant, a soldier, and a statesman; and ended as an archbishop, a martyr, and a saint. He is still a legend in a country which is notable for its scepticism toward the Middle Ages. And although there must be many great churchmen who receive more fervent suffrages from the faithful, he has always been a success upon the stage.

There is, indeed, a sense in which he was himself an actor. He seemed to be able to change his character as an actor will slip from one part into another. And whatever he chose to be, he was. As secretary to Archbishop Theobald he was as supple and successful as any papal nuncio of our own time. He could talk with cardinals on their own high plane of policy, and there was something in his appearance and his address which marked him down for preferment. His part had been written for him by Theobald and he played it to the best of his ability. It was a very ultramontane rôle—the binding of the English Church ever more closely to its Roman Mother—and there is no reason to think that Thomas was spiritually at one with the arguments which he so skilfully uttered. But you do not ask of an actor that he should believe in the part he is playing.

When he became Chancellor to Henry II, at Theobald's instigation, he so enlarged his office that he was soon the second man in the kingdom. He lived magnificently, but never vulgarly, on the secular level. His hospitality was lavish, and his court was more splendid than the King's. He had a special care for the graces and formalities of life and a sharp sense of what was befitting his office and his person. No breath of scandal touched him. He would accompany Henry everywhere except into the exploits of illicit love. He was quite possibly reacting against the rigors of Theobald's establishment at Canterbury, but his reaction was in perfect taste. His nature and temperament were aristocratic, and he was glad to be able to live like a lord.

His political achievement was remarkable. No one did as much as he to reduce the anarchy of the kingdom, to which his master had succeeded, or to restore the rights of property and the rule of justice. He was not, perhaps, the initiator of these policies, for his talent was of the administrative rather than the creative order. He could do, admirably, what he was told and better the instructions given him. In every way he was the necessary complement to the King. Where Henry was volatile he was steady; where Henry was erratic he was methodical; where Henry was graceless he was courtly; but where Henry was affectionate he was affectionate also. They had the differences and the identities of friends, and their union was a political blessing. Only the saintly and sagacious Theobald, wasting toward his death at Canterbury, wondered what would happen to the Church. Who was to be its effective ruler, the national King or the supranational Pope? Theobald had trusted Thomas to supply the right answer.

But Thomas was in military harness, fighting Henry's battles against Toulouse. His personal share in the campaign was particularly irresponsible, since it was directed against Louis VII of France. He had himself arranged the betrothal of Henry's heir to the French King's daughter, and now he was urging Henry to an assault against his feudal overlord in complete disregard of the diplomatic consequence. But Thomas was enjoying himself, and the dynastic battlefield of medieval Gaul was no place for political prudence. The Chancellor, whose own military experience was nil, himself led his knights into action and taught them tactics of the fray. He was conspicuous for personal valor and unhorsed one of the most famous soldiers of France in single combat. The good, second-class mind often works the fastest, and Thomas, who was never an original thinker, had a compensating quickness in assimilation. His memory had always been remarkable, and it was just these facilities which fitted him for the conduct of great affairs. There was nothing he did not seem able to pick up.

When Theobald died, Henry asked the obvious question and Thomas gave the unexpected answer. It seemed to Henry a solution of every difficulty that Thomas should unite in his own person the offices of chancellor and archbishop, but his friend was not attracted by this invitation to virtuosity. It is possible to guess at the reason. His work as the King's minister was done, and he had tasted the fruits of secular ambition in all their infinite variety. He was perhaps satiated by secular glory, as intelligent men are commonly satiated by an excess of worldly things. There was the possibility of other conquests and the prospect of a more subtle, a spiritual dominion. This (he may have thought) would be less subject to sudden overthrow; this, of its very nature, would be more lasting. If his refusal of Henry's proposal to unite the two great offices was not, in its impulse, a sense of divine vocation, it was at least a sense of the possibilites of a new part. He was actor enough to know when the two sides of a rôle contradict each other and he knew that such a rôle was not worth playing. What he did not know was the depths and the heights to which the acting of a great part might lead him.

Something happened to Thomas when he received the laying-on of hands. He had walked to his consecration resolved to be a great archbishop and a determined upholder of the Church's rights; he walked away from it with the seeds of sanctity within him. There is no picture of him on which the mind may more comfortably dwell than the picture of these first, unclouded days of his

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episcopate. It was, in truth, a pastoral scene. He gave himself without reserve to his people, and especially to the poor for whom he had always had an exquisite charity, to his brethren of St. Augustine's Monastery, and to God. He spent (with what ease or difficulty we do not know) a great part of each day in prayer. He celebrated Mass with a swiftness and a kind of impersonal devotion which was remarked upon by all. His sermons were eloquent, persuasive and firmly reasoned. His mortifications included a sustained abstinence from those good things of the table which he liked and, in themselves, approved, and the regular practise of the discipline. He was never lost, however, in that self-regard which is among the snares of the spiritual aspirant. He busied himself incessantly about the needs of others, gave a tithe of all the wealth that came to the monastery to a neighboring hospital, and every afternoon washed the feet of thirteen beggars in memory of Christ. These are the marks of holiness, and only one question remains, the subtlety of which was to torment Saint Thomas to the end. For what purpose was he attempting sancity? His own glorification in the eyes of men and angels, or the glory of God?

Now it is not possible for us, and neither, in all probability, was it possible for him to answer that question with any certainty. The motives of the best of us are inextricably mixed. Saint Thomas Aquinas assures us that a measure of self-interest is not incompatible with holiness, and the selfishness of fear, for those who have not the perfection of love, may be a necessary aid to salvation. Just as Thomas Becket had a facility in learning, in diplomacy, in administration, and in war, so he may have found it easy to pray. But this is no guarantee of virtue. It is possible, also, that he became ambitious for the things of the Church and even the things of the spirit in the same way that he had been ambitious for those of the world. It would have been surprising if he did not. Never, even after his consecration, does a simple picture emerge of him: now he is the incipient saint, now the rigorous ascetic, now the ecclesiastical materialist, now the shepherd of his flock. In the long and bitter dispute with Henry he is brave but seldom tactful, persistent but not always charitable; he enjoyed the lust and not only suffered the necessity of battle.

One thing, however, is certain. He wanted, quite desperately, to die. He possibly believed that his martyrdom was essential for the Church's liberty; he surely coveted the martyr's crown. I have said that he was, in part, an actor and he had the actor's unenviable bias toward the dramatizing of himself. He would always choose his moment and his method, his time and place. His gestures and speech (although he nearly always said too much) were supremely appropriate to their occasions. When he went to Pope Alexander III at the beginning of his exile, he laid at the Pontiff's feet, in lieu of the customary gift, a copy of the Constitutions of Clarendon. He made a special visit to the great Romanesque church at Vézelay, where Saint Bernard had preached the Crusade, for the purpose, and perhaps the pleasure, of excommunicating his foes. Thomas was undoubtedly a proud man, and, like all people who suffer from pride, he found it very easy to be hurt and very difficult to forgive. Henry was like him in this respect, but they differed in the end because Thomas overcame his pride. The one is a heroic and the other is a tragic figure, because the one was able and the other was never able to forgive.

It was Thomas's ability to accept with grace a reconciliation so palpably hollow, which gives a serenity and at the same time so deep a sadness to his last days. His eyes are fixed on martyrdom with a perfection rather than a striving of the will. He was resigned and glad, where before he had been eager and anxious. He knew that his death was necessary, and one likes to think that he bothered less about whether his reasons had been right. Yet the spirit of the battle never quite died out in him. He would not absolve the bishops he had excommunicated unless they took a vow of obedience to the Pope, and he met his death immediately upon this refusal. But although he was prepared for martyrdom, he was still soldier enough to hurl one of his assailants down the stone staircase, where he was confronting them, with a not very polite imprecation on his lips.

The question arises, when we consider this man of brilliant parts and heroic stature—was it all worth while? Was Saint Thomas in the right? And the answer is "Yes" or "No." In so far as he was fighting for the independence of the Church from secular control, he was fighting the battle of human freedom. In so far as he was fighting for certain ecclesiastical privileges, which had no justification in reason and equity, and was taking his stand upon the early medieval conception of theocracy, he was wrong. But the best intellects of that time were wrong with him. The idea that the State was the policeman of the Church and that the State derived its powers from the Church was modified by Dante and the later political philosophers of the Middle Ages into the idea that both derived their particular autonomies from God. The next Archbishop of Canterbury very soon corrected Saint Thomas's extreme conservatism, but the vital fruits of his victory were retained for three hundred years. It was not until Henry Tudor that any English monarch again seriously challenged the liberty of the English Church—the liberty to belong to its Mother.

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Poetry

Mulier Amicta Sole

Woman supremely blest
In woman's prime desire
To be most richly dressed:
Incomparable attire,
Blindingly irridescent
In robe of cloth-of-sun,
With Pleiad-plaited coronet,
And slippered with the crescent!
Gown sun-spun,
Crown star-set,
And the moon
For her shoon!
Woman supremely fit
To be so clothed, the one
Found truest, best, immaculate!

FRAY ANGELICO CHAVEZ.

Maine Valley

This is the valley where tall elm trees arch
Like seraphs fallen asleep upon the march,
They touch their wing-tips over barns too vast
For any harvest but those of the past.
The barns have half returned into the hills,
The lilacs have grown wild as whippoorwills,
There are no hosts of young men now to lay
Such stonewalls up as once shut cows and hay
In little universes of serenity.
Daisies flow here like whitecaps on the sea,
They fill the world with airy, living honey
Through afternoons remote and deep and sunny.
The houses are the kind men built when life
Meant many children when one took a wife,
Meant staying in one place until the land
Fitted a man as plow-hafts fit the hand,
Three generations on a summer's day
Working thigh to thigh and making hay,
Boys yearning to get married and have sons
Before they finished being their fathers' ones.
And now the fields are empty, the wild rose
Is coming back, the wild honey flows,
And the pinewoods are widening again
Across the fields that once were tame as men.

ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN.

Small Moment

In winter, as in arrested being,
I remember spring, summer, and autumn;
All color of those seasons withheld
Save in the morning and the evening skies.
Imperceptibly leaf-bud comes into leaf,
And at length it is the moment my hand
Moves toward the elder blossom, its beauty
Yielding to utility of winestock;
This is the moment between and before:
Within my hand the balsam seedpod bursts
And at my touch the poppy sways upon
Its stem like a reptile-headed shaker;
Yet my hand withdraws from the orange lichen;
Man cannot have his being and retain
About him outward vestiges of growth;
I choose from all wild and purple asters
Before I take the darkest of them all.
I know each of these is a small moment,
Yet I who take the blossom and the fruit
Cannot change all: it is the moment
The bittersweet unhasps the brilliant berry,
And now in December the last flake shrouds
The withered fruit, and partially budded vine.

ETHEL B. AREHART.

To a Ship's Lantern

Your light had winked with starlight on the sea
And crept into the circling mist, and hung
On crests when waves turned mountains soon to be
Hurled down to hissing valleys; you had swung
To drowsy rhythms while the island lights
Danced out to you from some enchanted shore—
And now you glow into whatever nights
May find this inland road beside his door.

When first his rolling stride had turned this way
He said he keeps you with a dream or two . . .
To share the little time he has to stay,
And you are polished daily, bright as new.
He always lights you when the sun goes down—
In case a sailor finds the little town!

GLENN WARD DRESBACH.

Two Poems

Memory Exercise

Summon back now, when the sun is whitening
that sullen window-square at the foot of your bed,
Time's clock-tick beatings in the dark on your eyelids
and your thought upon the inexhaustible dead.

Here you shall find strength for the day's breaking.
Surge of bell-tower sound will be no more
an impulse to this emptiness of question
like fog upon a low, rock-girdled shore.

Thinking on Stars

It is pleasant to remember stars are shining.
In the arched dark, not seen for the roof between,
they hold a patient, unregarded circling,
nor pause to question what their course may mean.

And I shall sleep tonight, and for more nights after,
soundly, because of knowledge they are there.
Grooved in law, against the slow defilement
of years, they wheel aloft through the soundless air.

EARL DANIELS.

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Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

I HOPE it may not seem unduly egotistical for the former editor of THE COMMONWEAL to point out that the taking over of control by the group now responsible for the policies of this journal is a pretty sound proof of the fruitfulness of the work done by its founders. Some of the new editors worked out their apprenticeship to the art and mystery of the press in THE COMMONWEAL's office, as junior members of our staff. All the others have been associated with one or another of the many educational or cultural activities that have sprung up in the field of Catholic lay movements since THE COMMONWEAL began its career in 1924. Of course, it would be decidedly egotistical to claim that the influence of this paper was the main cause for the appearance of these other movements — liturgical, literary, artistic, sociological, philosophical, etc. — but it certainly is true that the first appearance of THE COMMONWEAL, fourteen years ago, was coincidental with, if not the most important aspect of, a widespread resurgence of American Catholic intellectual movements. It is also quite manifestly true that this journal had a good deal to do with the promotion and extension of this general movement, with many particular aspects of which it has been closely associated.

Therefore, the changes that are now in process on this journal are far from being breaks with its former policies and traditions; on the contrary, they are the evidences of a legitimate and appropriate development of a living institution. In this field, as in all others, unless the pioneers find others to follow them, and to build solidly where they could only open the trails, and to explore the unknown possibilities, then indeed their efforts have been futile. So I think that as the one chiefly responsible for some fifteen years for the pioneering work of THE COMMONWEAL, I am fairly entitled not only to welcome my successors warmly and gladly, but also to find their advent to be a vindication of what began as a somewhat desperate adventure, and which has always remained hazardous, but which is now arrived at a point where a greater field of service than ever before opens before it, precisely at a time when youthful forces are eagerly ready to carry on the task.

We who began the work are not, however, turning our backs upon it. As a matter of fact, those who may be termed the veterans of this campaign will remain associated with the new phase of the work, in an advisory capacity, or as contributing editors, writing regularly or occasionally for its pages, and, of course, remaining the well-wishers, helpers, elder comrades and friends of the younger group. My own part in the joint advance will be to write in this column about whatever I please, events, and persons, and books, and the ever-changing aspects of the affairs of the day. And in beginning my task, I wish not only to thank most heartily, for all their generous, and at times really self-sacrificing, support, the thousands of known and unknown friends of THE COMMONWEAL who have made its work possible, but also I beg them all—so far as what I say may count with them—to extend to the new directors of the work the same helpful interest which they have given so loyally and devotedly to my collaborators and to me.

I would add my own conviction that if it were true that there was a need for such a paper as this, fourteen years ago, and surely there was, that need is far greater today. When we began publication, our country was just entering that epoch of frenetic financial prosperity (for some: for many indeed, but not for the nation as a whole), which in the opinion of the predominant leadership of our people was ushering in a new and permanent period of wealth, of ever-developing luxuries and comforts. We who were responsible for the direction of this paper did not wholly share that view; indeed, we may honestly say that in common with other observers we were not blind to the signs and omens of trouble approaching, and of grave national and international problems pressing forward. But I for one will confess that we failed to perceive how imminent was the disaster which began its tremendous course in 1929. In spite of all that was said by the Head of the Church himself, in "Quadragesimo Anno," the deepening and the darkening of the storm clouds of world revolution came upon us without a commensurate effort on our part — or, so I would affirm, on the part of Catholic leadership in general, clerical or lay — fully to arouse our own people, and to warn our fellow citizens.

Now, we are in the very midst of the hurricane as it bursts. It is quite useless to attempt to return to where we were before 1929. A new world has to be built up on the ruins of the old; and to that task a paper such as this has a definite contribution to make. However, on this page, it is no longer necessary, in fact it would now be unfitting, to use the editorial "we," or "us"; for here I speak only for myself, and not for the editors of THE COMMONWEAL, save, of course, in so far as our views agree and support each other; as no doubt they often will. And no doubt they often will not do so, because, as they themselves will tell you elsewhere in this issue, while this paper has always been a forum for all sorts and kinds of opinions compatible with the controlling principles of our faith (indeed, at times we have resembled Donnybrook Fair!), it is the intention of the new group to enlarge that liberty, and to emphasize the note of individual opinion.

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We are all agreed, of course, that unless there be not only a great renewal but also a swift and certain and practical application of the truths taught by the Catholic Church, the present crisis of humanity cannot be solved peaceably or reasonably. But it is the function of such a journal as this to discuss not only the "why" of such a situation, but also—and perhaps the more important point—the "how" of the best possible solutions. And it is precisely at this point where opinions inevitably differ. Now, whether this paper, collectively, through its editors, or through its individual writers, can muster the wisdom and find the power to speak the great formulas of true reforms which must be found lest society perish, who shall say? But that in trying our best to hit the mark we should at least turn out a readable and lively paper—that, I think, is wholly probable.

Communications

GOOD LUCK!

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Here's all good luck for the new COMMONWEAL, and you may be assured of the continuance of my interest in it.

I should be glad to continue my advisory activity by being one of your contributing editors. Owing to prior commitments I shall not be able to give much time to THE COMMONWEAL, but you may be assured that I shall be glad to do anything that I can. With all good wishes,

JAMES J. WALSH.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: In this morning's paper, I have just read with the keenest pleasure your statement amplifying the news contained in the "Week by Week" note of your issue of April 1.

I am inexpressibly glad to know that Michael Williams will continue active work with you and contribute a weekly column of his own. No matter how much other work he may be planning, in writing and lecturing, it would have been a calamity to have lost the contagion of his zeal in your pages. I worked by his side for two years while THE COMMONWEAL was first being planned—from 1922 to 1924—and I know, as perhaps few others could know, the measure of his courage, tenacity and crusading energy. In the fourteen years since the first issue went to press, no one else could have done quite what he did in matching zeal with sanity and in bringing passionate conviction within serene perspective.

But this continuity of Michael Williams's work is not my only reason for being pleased. There is also the continuity of the work of the two new editors-in-chief, Mr. Burnham and Mr. Skillin. Neither of them, of course, knew personally all of that first exuberant staff of 1924—Thomas Walsh, Harry Stuart, Helen Walker and the others, whose editorial gatherings were memorable sessions of wit and words and unending good fun. But they are so able, personally, and have been active in THE COMMONWEAL's affairs for so many years that they know intimately its strong points and its weaknesses, its unavoidable limitations and its full opportunities. Mr. Williams must be quite as happy as I am to know that this new financial and editorial direction will bring with it all this important tradition and background. My sincerest congratulations and good wishes!

R. DANA SKINNER.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: As a member of the former Editorial Council of THE COMMONWEAL I have followed with great interest the news of the changes in its ownership and management.

It is only natural in view of our former association that I should have a deep appreciation of the work which Mr. Williams has done in building up THE COMMONWEAL as an intelligent organ of Catholic opinion. I am delighted that he is to continue his interest and his contributions under the new management.

I sincerely hope that the new and more ambitious COMMONWEAL will have every success, and that it will continue the best in Catholic thought in everything that affects present-day affairs.

JOHN J. BURNS.

St. Meinrad, Ind.

TO the Editors: I have read just recently of the reorganization of THE COMMONWEAL. . . . Of course, to COMMONWEAL readers, Michael Williams has been the pervading and guiding spirit always of this magazine. In fact, his association with this magazine has not only gained for him the very highest esteem of both Catholics and non-Catholics, but has also won for the publication itself the greatest respect. I sincerely hope that he will continue to have much to do with it—I can hardly conceive of it without his guidance, at least in large measure. Yours for great success,

VINCENT D. OSBORNE.

Minerva, N. Y.

TO the Editors: If THE COMMONWEAL maintains its fifteen-year record for another fifteen years it will deserve handsomely of its country.

ELLA FRANCES LYNCH.

THOMISM CONTRA COMMUNISM

Havre Boucher, Nova Scotia.

TO the Editors: The intellectuals who tend toward Communism have begun to think. This is one of the conditions of a Christian resurgence. For the study of man in relation to social forms and formulae should lead to the study of man himself, to a knowledge of integral man, to the man that has been unacknowledged in the forms of materialistic capitalism. The great exponent of integral man is Saint Thomas. To meet the modern hunger to know man, there ought to be, on the street, 35-cent editions of the "Summa Theologica" in English.

GEORGE BOYLE,
Editor, The Extension Bulletin.

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The Stage and Screen

The Sea Gull

THE TRIUMPH of Chekhov is the triumph of the unspoken word. I do not mean by this the triumph of incident, or action, or situation, in contradistinction to dialogue; I mean quite the contrary—the triumph indeed of the dialogue, but the dialogue which is unsaid. The words of a poet, the color of a painter, the notes of a composer suggest more than they apparently perform, if they are to have more than an ephemeral effect. And the same is true of the dramatist. The play in which the words express just what they say and no more, in which they can be spoken in just one way, may be successful for a season, but it will not live. The human mind demands more of its great dramatists than that. It demands characters which can be interpreted in different ways and lines which can be read accordingly; in short, it demands the unspoken word, the word which is the door to the corridors of the imagination. Those who have seen or even read "The Sea Gull" must realize that Chekhov is one of the few modern dramatists to whom this magic has been given. Only in the plays of the Irish dramatists, and in some moments of O'Neill and Anderson, do we find in modern English-speaking drama this double sense in dialogue. Most of our other successful plays, skilfully written though they may be, express solely what is in the words themselves, and are therefore only two-dimensional.

What is the meaning of "The Sea Gull"? It of course tells the story of Trepleff, an idealistic writer, who kills himself because the girl he loves has been made unhappy by an older writer, and one far less original, who is the lover of Trepleff's mother, a selfish, egotistic actress. But this is merely the dry bones of the play. What counts is its exposition of character, and with that the exposition of an age and a civilization—the civilization of Russia's pre-war landed gentry. Well-meaning, and on the whole kindly, they are presented to us in all their basic futility and tired neurasthenia. We have Trepleff beating his head against the wall of insensitivity, too weak to fight the battle of life; Trigorin, the arch-type of the literary man of talent but without genius, weaker even than Trepleff in that he both understands his weakness and accepts it; Nina, the young girl who would be an actress, but who is afflicted with a sensitiveness which almost destroys her; Irina, the actress, vain, selfish, unreal in her emotions; Sorin, her brother, the arch-type of failure in everything he has attempted; Masha, who fails in her love and is unhappy in her marriage. Only Dorn, the doctor, seems to have lived life as he was meant to live it—that is, if we perhaps except Irina. Chekhov puts these people upon the stage and allows them to act and talk, as they would act and talk; not logically and for a predetermined purpose as an English or French dramatist would make them but with a strange Slavic inconsequence, which yet at the end is that of an iron-bound logic. A paradox indeed, but a paradox implicit with an extraordinary truth.

The Lunts and the Theatre Guild have given "The Sea Gull" a most interesting and vital production in a new and splendidly vital translation by Stark Young. Alfred Lunt as Trigorin shows his artistic integrity by burying himself in the ensemble, and giving a passive performance of a passive rôle. If he is not entirely successful in getting rid of his comedy technique, it is at least only in his manner of reading his lines. Miss Fontanne is less successful. Her make-up is unfortunate and her performance is too flamboyant. Richard Whorf as Trepleff, Sydney Greenstreet as Sorin, Uta Hagen as Nina, and Margaret Webster as Masha are all superb. In short, "The Sea Gull" is one of the delights of the season. There ought to be some theatre in New York where such classics can be given and regiven. It is only by the playing of the classics that our public can be shown the triviality of what they too often hail as masterpieces. (At the Shubert Theatre.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Life Dances On

AT THE Biennial Film Exposition in Venice, this picture was pronounced the finest production of 1937. "Un Carnet de Bal" (Dance Program) was written and directed by Julien Duvivier, who has to his credit, "Poil de Carotte." In both its weakness and its strength it is completely French. In seven different episodes, seven different artists give superb performances which are mutually dependent upon the rather absurd device of a lonely widow tracing the history of her partners at her first ball. None of the incidents would be particularly memorable were it not for the characterizations that quicken them: Françoise Rosay—out of "Kermesse Heroique"—as the demented mother who thinks her son is still alive; Jouvet as the master criminal and proprietor of a night club; Harry Baur, the disillusioned musician turned monk; Willm, the Alpine guide; Raimu, the mayor in the Midi; Blanchar, the epileptic doctor; Fernandel, the coiffeur. Each of them, in the few moments allotted, suggests the possibility of another complete film. There is the rollicking comedy of Raimu who set out to be the President of the Republic and instead has become the president of everything else—in his own village. In the Dominican choirmaster, Harry Baur shows a man who has run the gamut of life and found peace. "God has given me an excellent memory," he remarks to the beautiful widow, "but He has also suggested what I had best forget." The scene would have been more authentic had M. Duvivier permitted him to forget a bit more. It is only salvaged by Baur's quiet poise.

In French, the dialogue is direct and the diction pure delight, but never were words worse mutilated in translation. As the story relies much more than other foreign films have usually done upon words, it is seen here at distinct disadvantage. The framework of scenario and photography are below American standards. There is no unity except in the person of Christine and the endless reminder of her *carnet de bal;* no idea other than the suggestion that it is best to leave illusions alone. The most telling satire is in the contrast of the real ball with the dream—where slow motion is used most effectively for the waltz. As a museum piece of the French stage, "Life Dances On" should be seen.

EUPHEMIA VAN RENSSELAER WYATT.

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Books of the Day

The Alexandrian Mode

Joseph in Egypt, by Thomas Mann; translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. Two volumes. $5.00.

IT IS a difficult task to review this extraordinary novel. The reviewer is impressed by the author's solid knowledge of the earliest civilization of mankind, by his subtle virtuosity, his irony, his smiling wisdom as an observer of human nature, but does not find within this lengthy novel the pure enchantment of great poetry. Upon conclusion he is torn between admiration and disappointment. Yet, strangely enough, in their criticism of this discordant work (the German original was published more than a year before the excellent English translation) the reviewers, here and abroad, have given little credit to such contradictory impressions. They use superlatives of praise or rejection; there is little approach to esthetic problems; the critics seem prejudiced by political emotions.

Thomas Mann is a voluntary emigrant from Germany, fighting against the *Kulturpolitik* of the Third Reich and confessing belief in the restoration of democracy. So his new novel, though without any mention of up-to-date politics, is either ignored by sympathizers with Nazi Germany or passionately rejected. On the other hand, German Leftists and their numerous friends in this country are busy advancing Mann's fame. Most of the American reviews are sheer and obscuring flattery. Mr. Knopf, Mann's publisher, has no scruples in advertising that the "immortal" "Joseph" is "perhaps the greatest creative work of the twentieth century." An extreme statement, inasmuch as this is only 1938 and the creative forces of the next sixty-two years are unknown even to the smartest American business men, and there is nothing overwhelmingly "creative" in the "Alexandrinism" of Mann's latest novel, regardless of what virtues, art, refinement or wisdom you may discover in its pages.

"Joseph in Egypt" is the third part of an epic telling the story of Joseph and his brothers. A fourth novel is supposed to follow. The author combines the story of the Old Testament with an extensive study of the history and mythology of the ancient Orient. But the simplicity of the Bible and the intellectualism of the modern "science of religions" are heterogeneous, and Thomas Mann does not succeed in transforming the two different fountains of his story into one organic whole. His diligent reading of all literature available, his profound occupation with Babylonian and Egyptian philosophy, are no doubt to be admired, but they are not transmuted into poetic form. Such an interpretation and presentation of past cultures may be interesting as a popular philosophic history, but has nothing to do with "creative" poetry. Especially in the first two novels these reconstructions and hypotheses dissipate the interest of the story instead of enriching it. (This criticism is only from the esthetic point of view; from the standpoint of Catholic theology there is still greater objection to Mann's historical and philosophical background.) The excessive overweight of unorganized knowledge, which seems so wonderful to the pet literati of faddish American magazines, is actually the chief weakness of the whole epic. I must nevertheless admit that in this third novel the story itself, covering ten

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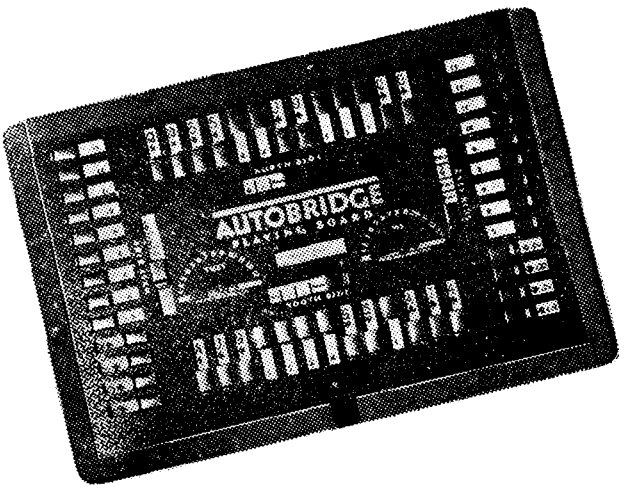

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years in the house of Potiphar, is of greater intensity than in the two former volumes.

This third novel's design is: to show Joseph, the emigrant, the ambitious and at the same time God-fearing young man in the Egyptian atmosphere. The psychology of the Hebrew youth, who enters a world of superior civilization but inferior religious outlook, is presented with cleverness and experienced subtility. But Mann's picture of the Egyptian world itself seems to me far from satisfactory; it is oversophisticated and eccentric, lacking real flesh and blood. The solemnity of his Egyptians has not the monumentality of their architecture, but is antic and bizarre. If you listen to the absurd gossip of Potiphar's parents, you seem to be sitting in Bangkok's grotesque temples of porcelain fragments and not close to the dignified gigantic pillars of Karnak and Luxor. Also the fairy-tale figures of the two dwarfs—one benign, one malign—belong among the chinoiseries of Siam rather than among the rigid Egyptians, and the same may be said of the bigoted priest, Beknechon.

The most authentic Egyptian figures are Potiphar with his sterile dignity and the faithful steward Monkaw, whose duty is the bathos of his life. Potiphar's wife becomes a modern occidental character. Her famous invitation to Joseph is "not the word of a strumpet but of a woman overwhelmed." The story which is covered by one sentence in the Bible is puffed up to 300 pages by the modern novelist. The bombastic conversations of the two lovers—with some touches of Freudian psychoanalysis—fit better into a morbid Park Avenue drawing-room than into the self-controlled atmosphere of ancient Egypt. Of course Joseph's chastity would find no parallel in a Park Avenue hero, but as a matter of fact the woman's desire is told by Mann much more impressively and credibly than are Joseph's religious ideas.

What remains to the reader after struggling through these often boring two volumes? Many admirable artistic ornaments, but not an artistic structure. The mind is not enriched by a convincing picture of an epoch and of a nation. Instead the reader remembers brilliant observations and subtleties, a cunning unmetaphysical aspect of life, which Mr. Lin Yutang might consider "absolutely Chinese." Considerable artistic ability is wasted in a novel which as a whole is not a creative work of art. I am convinced that Mann's Joseph epic will not survive for future generations but will soon prove "out of date." The author of the "Magic Mountain" and "Death in Venice" is a morbid poet of décadence also in his biblical novels.

C. O. CLEVELAND.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Dry Guillotine, by René Belbenoit. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $3.00.

"DRY GUILLOTINE" is the story of a man who, condemned to the penal colony of French Guiana, refused to allow his life to be destroyed by its barbaric cruelty and his spirit to be demoralized by its moral degeneration and its constant crime. It is hard to see how a so-called civilized country can tolerate such unspeakable abnormalities as constitute the penal colonies of St. Laurent and its outlying islands, Re, Royal, St. Joseph, and Devil. If a book such as "Uncle Tom's Cabin" had power enough to help blast the slavery of black men from North America, I think this story of a man who refused to die will wipe out the slavery of white men in French Guiana.

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In 1848, the penal colony was established in French Guiana to take the place of the slave colonizers liberated that year. Since then France has poured nearly 60,000 white felons into practical slavery; brought them to the dry guillotine to suck out their lives in abysmal misery, to destroy their souls in a hell of torture. Of course, these men were criminals and bad men. But, no matter how heinous their sins, how revolting their crimes, not one could deserve this slow torturous killing. Belbenoit had unusual opportunities to gather his material. He served about fifteen years, saw much, heard more, and finally had access to the official records as archivist in the Governor's Office. The story he tells is almost unbelievable. The brutality and meanness of the guards, with black officers driving white men to hard and sickening labor in the marshlands of Guiana; the still greater meanness of prisoner to prisoner in petty graft and double dealing treachery; the terrible foulness of rampant homosexuality; the oppression and daily murder of weakened brothers by brutal degenerates; the misery of the lives of the *liberés,* free from the penal colony but condemned to perpetual residence in the neighboring Cayenne, are set forth in stark frankness. Even though written by a convict whose soul was filled with hatred and revenge, it bears all the earmarks of truth.

Four unsuccessful attempts at escape finally reach their climax in a rough canoe sailed for seventeen days on the open sea till it reached Trinidad. Of the six in the boat only one, René Belbenoit, reached liberty. Struggling through the coastal swamps, living with Indians, stowing away on tramps, he finally after two years reached Los Angeles, the only white man to ever pierce this country.

If your stomach is strong it is a great story. The startling thing about it is, how a Catholic country like France could allow these 60,000 men to die without a priest. No priest, no church, no sacraments, in French Guiana—just a stinking hell. Here's hoping Belbenoit's book does the trick of destroying it.

JOHN P. MC CAFFREY.

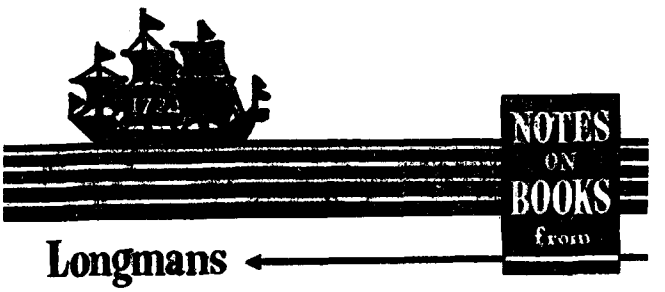
Intermission in Europe, by Vernon Bartlett. New York: Oxford University Press. $2.75.

A CHATTY, superficial autobiography of a British journalist and broadcaster, covering the post-war period in Europe. The author believes that war in the near future is improbable principally because of British rearmament and the desperate desire of the overwhelming mass of people in every country for peace. J. O'C.

CRITICISM

The Triple Thinker, by Edmund Wilson. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.75.

SOME readers are perhaps more familiar with the purely political writings of Edmund Wilson whose celebrated conversion to Communism and subsequent repudiation of Stalinism have received much comment in the little world of the weekly reviews. There is danger that some readers might do the author of "The Triple Thinker" a great injustice, for as a literary critic he possesses an integrity which defies assault. With few exceptions the essays which make up the present volume are distinct contributions to American literary criticism and, were it not for the fact that "The Triple Thinker" is a collection rather than a unified whole, it would deserve to be ranked with Van Wyck Brooks's "The Flow-



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ering of New England" and Joseph Wood Krutch's neglected masterpiece of some years ago, "Five Masters."

Mr. Wilson does not aspire to say the last word, nor does he maintain that literature can be explained merely in terms of its social and political significance, but he does illuminate a work of art by referring it to the society of which it was, in a sense, a product. His essay on "Flaubert's Politics," for instance, sets forth the political significance of that novelist's fiction while insisting at the same time that none of his writings were designedly political. "His [Flaubert's] informal expressions of his general opinions are as unsystematized and as impromptu as his books are well-built and precise." The essay on Samuel Butler is also distinguished by the same just perception of the different planes or hierarchies of criticism. The discussion of Bernard Shaw is a splendid exposition of one of the great paradoxes of our times. It is the artist, according to Mr. Wilson, rather than the philosopher of socialism, who is the devil of contradiction. "Shaw," he says, "was not only a political prophet struggling for socialist ideas, but an artist realizing himself through art."

No less valuable as a critical analysis is the piece on A. E. Housman, who impresses the author as a man who "has somehow managed to grow old without, in a sense, ever coming to maturity." The memoir on Paul Elmer More is as kindly as one might expect and the long discussion on the technique of modern verse is the least valuable chapter in the book. A biographical essay on the eccentric reformer John Jay Chapman balances a remarkable display of erudition in the article on the Russian poet Pushkin, two of whose poems Mr. Wilson translates. The concluding paper, "Marxism and Literature," is a rather superior and austere answer to the lunatic fringe of proletarian critics who, like Granville Hicks, attempt to measure literature by the yard-stick of the class struggle.

It is an odd and perhaps impertinent fact that "The Triple Thinker" more closely resembles the work of the neo-humanists in its tone, its logical method and sometimes its conclusion than it does the literature of the Left Wing.

FRANCIS X. CONNOLLY.

The Greenwood Hat, by J. M. Barrie. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.75.

A BRIEF and lively preface to this little book informs us that it was printed privately a few years ago. It would have been well to have left it at that. A book privately printed has an audience of its own which enjoys the unenvied privilege of reading it. But a book flung to the public should be exoteric, depending upon qualities which the public understands and loves. "The Greenwood Hat" is Barrie at loose ends, and Barrie at loose ends is like a box of scattered matches. Each one has the quality of ignition; but it is hard to strike fire.

There are some pleasant pages about book stalls (only Lamb has written them so much better), a good account of a rapturous schoolboy whose house "captain" deigns to visit him, and an amusing chapter on the tiny theatre in Dumfries for which Robert Burns once wrote prologues, which never could afford new scenery, but made the Shaughraun's cottage do service for Glamis Castle and the Tower of London, and which gave to its audiences a bewildering array of plays. These are the flickering lights that brighten a tiresome book. Barrie could be trusted to strike fire here and there. If you read the whole of a

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story, or sat through the whole of a play, you found this out. He was the most uncertain and the most uneven of writers, but he was never consistently dull. Always when you least expected it came the leaping flame or the tense moment, transitory and convincing.

One flawless piece of work attests the author's power, "Farewell Miss Julie Logan." It is a little book, barely a hundred pages; but it holds all that Barrie could do best. The shadow of the supernatural hangs over it, the relentlessness of nature dominates it. The "locking of the glen" as the ice closes in, and the strange stillness that follows it forebodes the coming of the "Spectrum." And who could fail to welcome so charming an apparition? We are not wise to break barriers. They have been built for our safety. On that point Barrie was always plain. But he and he alone knew how intimate the unknown could be.

AGNES REPPLIER.

Opera—Front and Back, by H. Howard Taubman. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.75.

"LIFE" can keep on going to the party, but it need not go to the opera, for Howard Taubman has been there (and often, these many years that he has been the New York *Times's* music editor); and he has written about the life of opera with the reportorial accuracy of the candid camera. Indeed, Mr. Taubman's generous book has more than thirty pages of candid "action" shots, his newspaper enjoying an "exclusive" photo arrangement with the Metropolitan.

For sheer information, this book is nothing less than encyclopedic; its like has never been presented, even in part, before. For the opera, and not the circus, is "the greatest show on earth," especially the Metropolitan with its three-ring repertory of French, German and Italian works (not to mention an occasional Deems Taylor in English, or Chaliapin's Russian counterpointing the rest of the cast's French or Italian)—all within one week; any week; every week!

Mr. Taubman's book shows you how it's done; how this fabulous enterprise, compact of human equations, manages to function—not without friction, however, which accounts for a laugh on almost every page of the more-than-300 in this backstage survey. Toscanini's early days at the Met; the long and opulent period of Otto Kahn's "angeling" the company under Gatti Casazza's general direction; singers from Caruso to Tibbett, Farrar and Mary Garden to Flagstad—all figure prominently (and above all factually and realistically) in this engrossing account of opera as an art, a profession and a business.

In his chapter on how the company prepares its list of works for each season, with revivals and novelties, Mr. Taubman is guilty of an oversight when arguing that the Metropolitan, once a work is announced, never "lets it down," come what may in the way of "insurmountable" difficulties in bringing the work to the public with Metropolitan *éclat*. Two season's ago (Miss Bori's final one with the company, and the first which saw Edward Johnson out of the tenor ranks and into the director's office) the company, including of course these two artists in the title rôles, never got beyond the rehearsal stage of Debussy's "Pelléas et Mélisande," later announcing this singular work as a special post-season offering, and finally refunding the money to a public that grew larger and larger for this supreme achievement in polarizing music and drama.

WALTER ANDERSON.

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HISTORY & BIOGRAPHY

The Secret Letters of the Last Tsar; edited by Edward J. Bing. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $3.50.

THERE is so much to object to in this book, that one does not know where to begin. First of all, the title of it savors of a sensationalism which is out of place, when one remembers the tragic subject of it. It would have been far better to have adhered to the English version, and have called the volume quite simply "The Letters of Tsar Nicholas and Empress Marie." However, this is not as important as the abominable, and in some instances ridiculous, editing of these letters, and the confusion of personalities with which they are filled. Their editor evidently knew nothing about the Russian Court or its prominent personages. For instance, on page 83, I find Dr. Leyden, an eminent German physician who attended Alexander III during his last illness, and later on Grand Duke George Alexandrovitch, mentioned as a member of the Dowager Empress's household, which assertion would no doubt have immensely amused both of them if they had still been alive; on page 87 the editor informs us that Ropscha was a suburban residence of the Grand Duke Wladimir which it never was; and so forth. Whenever he comes to anything he does not know, the editor of these letters allows his imagination to run riot with him, which is rather a rash thing to do in matters of historic importance. And when we find General Alexeiev, aide-de-camp to the Czar, signing himself "Equerry General," we fall into the ridiculous, as must appear obvious to anyone.

In regard to the letters themselves, I feel inclined to believe they are not all genuine, because they contain certain things the Empress Marie could never have written. For instance, the letters undated, probably out of caution, in which she announces to Nicholas II the engagement of his sister, the Grand Duchess Olga, as something hard to believe! This the Empress never could have done, considering the fact that the Grand Duchess's marriage with Prince Peter of Oldenburg had been arranged years before. Then to call them children is just as absurd, for Prince Peter was thirty-five and the Grand Duchess Olga was twenty. And that the Empress should say she had to consent to the marriage, when in reality it was only the sovereign's consent that counted—this fact alone would lead one to view with suspicion this particular letter. Another surprising thing is to find the Empress Marie writing to her son in Russian. She never learned Russian well, in spite of the fifty years she lived in Russia, and certainly did not write it fluently.

In regard to the contents of these letters, they only confirm what we already knew of the Emperor Nicholas

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II: his lack of heart, extraordinary indifference to everything taking place around him, and the autocratic tendencies he exhibited to the last, and which finally proved his undoing. The Empress shows a far better comprehension of the events in which she was concerned, and her letter concerning Finland and Finnish affairs sounds almost prophetic, just as her appreciation of the character of General Bobrikoff, Finland's governor, is just and correct. If the Czar had listened to his mother, he might have avoided many pitfalls and mistakes!

Much unnecessary fuss has been made about this correspondence. The world would have lost nothing, if it had never seen the light of day.

CATHERINE RADZIWILL.

RELIGION

The Right Reverend Dom Edmond Obrecht, O. C. S. O., by Father Maria Amadeus. Gethsemani, Ky.: Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani.

THIS biography of the fourth Abbot of the famous Trappist monastery at Gethsemani, Kentucky, was written by one of the monks of the order, with the assistance of other members of the community. Honored with an appreciative Foreword from no less a personage than the Cardinal Archbishop of Philadelphia, it is warmly commended by the Abbot General of the Trappists at Rome. In every sense of the words, therefore, the book is an ecclesiastical production—it is even published by the abbey; and thus issuing from the innermost courts of the Church, it well expresses that spirit of complete devotion to the high ideals of contemplative monasticism which it is the special vocation of the Cistercian, or Trappist, Order to foster and to illustrate.

How that vocation touched the spirit of a young Frenchman at a moment when he was strongly impelled to join the military service of his native country, and led him to become a priest and a monk and, in the course of time, an abbot ranking high among the modern leaders of the Catholic Church, is told with strong and revealing clarity and simplicity. The boy's father well expressed the value of such a life in his words to his son, when asked for advice as to his choice of a vocation: "I would rather see you in the robe of a Trappist lay Brother than honored with the baton of a Marshal of France." It is because such a true estimate of the values of life is held firmly by Catholic families throughout the world that young men and young women cheerfully, even joyously, turn aside from what others think to be the more agreeable and enjoyable and profitable paths, to enter the service of the Church—in the priesthood and the religious orders and congregations.

Why some of these servants of the Church should be attracted to the "active," while others choose the "contemplative," orders, is one of the great mysteries of the religious calling. It is probable that this biography of a great modern monk may be the agency to awaken in many American souls the desire to follow the example set before him in this fascinating book. This is all the more likely to occur since the author very wisely and very successfully deals with his revered subject not only as the great high priest which undoubtedly he was, but also he portrays the strong, human, living character of a very temperamental and individual man. In this way the influence of Abbot Obrecht will continue to exert itself, as he himself would desire it to do, in the service of his beloved order, which was in his eyes worthy of love and

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service simply because it was the well-tested instrument of the Catholic Church, which, in its turn, was worthy of love and service because it was the servant of Christ on earth. MICHAEL WILLIAMS.

The Oxford Groups, by Maisie Ward. New York: Sheed and Ward. $.50.

MAISIE WARD (Mrs. F. J. Sheed) gives a friendly appraisal in pamphlet form of the value of the movement started by Frank Buchman, from the point of view of a Catholic interested in the conversion of the English-speaking peoples. H. B.

SCIENCE

The Fight for Life, by Paul de Kruif. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.00.

IN HIS usual lively and stirring style, Paul de Kruif has added another book to his shelf, making the general public understand better the successful fight against disease that the medical profession is conducting throughout the world. This volume tells the story of the war on maternal mortality, tuberculosis, syphilis, infantile paralysis, pellagra, all scourges of the first order, once looked upon as almost hopeless so far as prevention was concerned, but that are now demonstrated to be amenable to the discipline of preventive medicine to such a degree that it will probably not be long before they can all be definitely eliminated.

The expectancy of life has been lengthened to such a degree that one wonders whether we are not going to find ourselves in the course of the next generation faced with the serious problem of a world that has many more old folks in it than young. Youth has been the major element in our civilization down to the twentieth century. The question is what will happen to the human race when the majority is the other way.

The story of disease prevention and cure is indeed dramatic and De Kruif has taken advantage of every element contained in the situation to make this dramatic quality telling in its forcefulness. The book is scientific to a very striking degree and yet it is interesting to such an extent that it reads like a novel and one does not want to drop it until the end. De Kruif has created a new set of readers and his work promises to do a great deal of good. It is surprising how much has been accomplished in the betterment but which prove on further investigation to improvable but which prove on further investigation to present encouraging elements that will make life much more subject to the proper application of medical advance than has been the case so far. JAMES J. WALSH.

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The Inner Forum

THE ROMAN BREVIARY is a book of which most lay Catholics and many Protestants have heard, but it remains to very nearly all of us little more than a name. And yet the Breviary contains the Divine Office, that never-ceasing cycle of prayer which constitutes one of the obligations of the Latin Catholic priesthood.

In past centuries the Breviary—or "Book of Hours"—contributed a large share to the prayer-life of the laity; but with the great vogue for "popular devotions" (excellent in themselves, yet subject to the danger of becoming too individualistic), lay participation in the Divine Office became less and less common. The liturgical revival, so often warmly urged by the Holy See, was bound to lead to a renewed lay interest in the Breviary. Such an interest has shown itself in America. In 1931, a group of Catholic laymen in Brooklyn, going under the name of "Approved Workmen," began reading Matins and Lauds in English once a month. In 1936, Mr. Eugene McSweeney, of this same group, in collaboration with Miss Florence Breen of New York City and under the guidance of several members of the clergy, set in motion a new society—based on a concept emanating from St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota—the League of the Divine Office, to promote lay participation in the use of the Breviary. The activities involved in membership are simple: the daily recitation of a single "hour" of the Office, participation in a monthly public recitation of an hour, and attendance at an annual corporate Communion.

After two years the League of the Divine Office has made substantial progress in the neighborhood of New York, and indications of participation are beginning to be visible in other parts of the country. Eighty-eight persons are now known to be active members of the St. Joseph Center, and during the past year four members of that center have resigned to enter the religious life. One great but not insuperable obstacle to the spread of the idea has been the necessity of education in the use of the Breviary.

The solid progress of the League of the Divine Office will increase as the concept of Mystical Body Catholicism becomes more widely known and understood, and as the Liturgy becomes recognized as the social unifying force it is intended to be and can once more so readily become.

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Next Week

Education is a field of such professional and general interest to our readers and of such moment for the well-being of the nation that it will be our policy to subject it to constant discussion and emphasis. This is rather brilliantly exemplified next week, we think, in our spring EDUCATIONAL ISSUE.

Articles by Robert M. Hutchins of the University of Chicago; Arnold Lunn of Austria, Britain and points west; Blanche Jennings Thompson of Rochester, N. Y., and others.

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